

Professor Gerard O'Daly

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Platonism Pagan and Christian

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PREFACE

The fifteen studies collected here reflect a prolonged interest in the Platonism of late antiquity, and most of them are concerned with its exploration of the themes of human identity and the nature of mind and soul. Modern philosophers call this kind of theorizing the philosophy of mind, and several psychological concepts and activities that feature regularly in work on the philosophy of mind – sense-perception, imagination, memory, our awareness of time – are discussed in this volume. A desire to analyse arguments, particularly controversial ones, has been my principal motive for embarking on the research that led to these publications, but I have also tried to situate the arguments and the controversies in their historical and cultural context. In the most recent studies (XIII, XIV), this context has itself become the object of scrutiny.

Two figures dominate this collection, Plotinus and Augustine. My earliest research (I, II) was undertaken to test claims that Plotinus was the first philosopher of antiquity to exploit concepts of consciousness and the self, and in particular to map his discourse about the self onto his scheme of three transcendental hypostases, and explore the ways in which these hypostases may be said to be 'present' to us, whether in our rational activity or in mystical states of consciousness.

From Plotinus I moved to Augustine, less on account of perceived similarities (which are undeniable) between the two, than from a conviction that they represent interestingly divergent tendencies within the Platonist tradition, a divergence that could not be explained exclusively by the fact that one was a pagan and the other a Christian Platonist. Although much of my work on Augustine has been concerned with identifying his distinctive philosophical voice, contrast or comparison with Plotinus has been a regular feature of several of the essays (III–VI, VIII, XII), and Augustine, as well as Plotinus and other Neoplatonist interpreters of Plato, are crucial to the argument of the one study on Boethius (XV) reproduced here. One implicit but striking conclusion of these studies is that their topics and concerns reflect, for the most part, not so much debates between pagan and Christian adversaries, as endeavours by participants in a common culture,

that of the Roman world of late antiquity, to understand themselves and their environment.

Several of the Augustinian studies were preliminary (III–IX) or complementary (XII) to my book *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (1987), often exploring topics in greater detail, and reaching findings that are assumed in the book. Others (XIII, XIV) were written while I was working on a later book, *Augustine's City of God: A Reader's Guide* (1999). The Boethius paper (XV) was an unpredictably complex consequence of *The Poetry of Boethius* (1991), which endeavoured to read the poems of the *Consolation of Philosophy* as accessible contributions of high quality to the great tradition of Latin versification: the poem studied here (*Phil. cons.* V m. 4) is perhaps the technical exception that proves the rule.

All the studies are reproduced as they were originally published, except no. VII, which, with some minor changes of phrasing, is the original English version of a paper published in Spanish.

GERARD O'DALY

University College London
December 2000

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PREFACE

This book was submitted in November 1968 to the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Berne as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It is now published without any substantial changes being made in the original manuscript.

I am indebted to the Senate of the National University of Ireland, whose award of a Travelling Studentship enabled me to engage in research work on Plotinus at Berne, and whose generous financial help made possible the book's publication.

I owe an especial gratitude to Professor John J. O'Meara, who first stimulated my interest in Neoplatonism during undergraduate days in Dublin, and who has been unfailing in his advice and encouragement at every stage of my work.

Professors A.H. Armstrong and G.L. Huxley read the book in typescript, and greatly encouraged its publication. Professor Huxley suggested many improvements of style and expression.

What I have learnt about Plotinus and Neoplatonism from Professor Willy Theiler is more than I can easily reckon: there is no page of this book which does not bear in some way, however imperfectly, the stamp of his influence. I have been privileged to enjoy his penetrating criticism, the exciting range of his learning and his great personal kindness during my years at Berne and since. This book is dedicated to him, in recognition of an incalculable debt.

Finally, my thanks are due to the editors and printers of Irish University Press for the care and attention which they have given to the production of this book.

Lancaster, May 1972 G.J.P. O'D.

ABBREVIATIONS, REFERENCES AND SYMBOLS

The only abbreviations which need explanation are:

DK	*Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 7th edition, by H. Diels, edited with additions by W. Kranz, Berlin, 1954.
MacKenna	*Plotinus: The Enneads*, translated by S. MacKenna. 3rd edition, revised by B.S. Page, London, 1962.
Plotins Schriften	*Plotins Schriften,* übersetzt von R. Harder. Neubearbeitung mit griechischem Lesetext und Anmerkungen, 6 vols. in 12, Hamburg, 1956-1971. (After Harder's death, this edition was continued by R. Beutler and W. Theiler)
RE	Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart, 1894-.
Sources	*Les Sources de Plotin*, Entretiens tome v, Fondation Hardt, Geneva, 1960.
SVF	*Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, edited by H. von Arnim, Leipzig, 1903-1924.
Theiler, *Vorbereitung*	W. Theiler, *Die Vorbereitung des Neuplatonismus*², Berlin, 1964.

This book follows the now generally accepted convention of indicating, in references to the *Enneads*, the chronological position of a particular treatise by means of a number between square brackets. Thus, for example, I 1 [53] refers to the first treatise of the first *Ennead*, the fifty-third treatise Plotinus wrote.

Translations are generally cited in the MacKenna translation, sometimes with modifications.

For typographical convenience, Greek terms and phrases are frequently transliterated, e.g. *nous, logos, hemêis.*

Spiritus asper is indicated by the prefix *h-* ; *for the Greek letters* η *and* ω *the symbols ê and ô are used.*

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to investigate the concept of "self" in the philosophy of Plotinus. That this concept plays an original and important part in Plotinus' thought has long been observed by commentators.[1] Emile Bréhier, in his book *La Philosophie de Plotin*, the first edition of which appeared in 1928, clearly isolated the phenomenon of self:"... cette hypostase qui constitue notre âme ... ce n'est pas tout à fait nous-mêmes; à cette réalité existant en soi qui constitue notre âme s'ajoute notre propre attitude à son égard; nous pouvons être en elle à des niveaux différents; nous pouvons nous séparer de sa partie supérieure ... Il semble parfois que Plotin ait l'intuition d'une activité proprement subjective qui, elle, ne peut se transformer en chose et s'hypostasier ... notre moi, ce que nous sommes pour nous n'est pas adéquat à notre âme."[2] Another French scholar, Jean Trouillard, takes up these themes in his book *La Purification Plotinienne*, published in 1955, and gives some striking formulations of the notion of self in Plotinus: "Le moi est partout, mais il est surtout ce qu'il veut être effectivement ... le moi est curseur ... il est *polyvalence* et *oscillation perpétuelle*."[3] In his excellent introduction to a selection of texts from Plotinus, written in 1956, Richard Harder observes the importance of the notion: "... die klare Gegenständlichkeit der klassischen Philosophie wird blasser, 'das Ich' (dieser Begriff taucht bei Plotin zuerst auf) wird zum Hauptträger der Wirklichkeit."[4] At the *Entreteins* on the *Sources de Plotin*, held at Fondation Hardt in 1957, E.R. Dodds comments: "... is not Plotinus the first to have clearly distinguished the concepts of soul ... and ego ...? For him the two terms are not coextensive. Soul is a continuum extending from the summit of the individual *psychê*, whose activity is perpetual intellection, through the normal

empirical self right down to the *eidôlon*, the faint psychic trace in the organism; but the ego is a fluctuating spotlight of consciousness."[5] Finally, W. Himmerich, in his book *Eudaimonia: die Lehre des Plotins von der Selbstverwirklichung des Menschen*, published in 1959, devotes a chapter[6] to the self in Plotinus, in what is the most comprehensive survey of the notion so far. The essential results of his research have elsewhere[7] been formulated by him: "hier [i.e. in Plotinus] ist der philosophische Ursprung des Ich- und damit des Personbegriffes ... das Ich ist für Plotin ... Entscheidungsinstanz ... Mittel- und Mittlerinstanz zwischen Sinnlichkeit und Geist ... Spontaneität ... Es ist ... das Vermögen der Ortung seelischen Seins, welches die Entscheidung trifft, auf welchem Niveau des Seins der Mensch lebt. Er kann auf animalischem, auf geistigem, und auf transzendentalem Niveau leben."

Such a central concept[8] in Plotinus' thought is deserving of fuller investigation. The present work started as an attempt to verify the above assertions, made primarily about the self of the historical process (chapter 2). It soon became clear that the concept was not only apparent throughout the course of Plotinus' writings, but that it developed in richness and importance for him over the years. Furthermore, the relation of this self of historical process to the original, intelligible self of which Plotinus often speaks, and the problem of the latter's individual existence in the totality of Being, called for study (chapter 3). So did the notion of self-knowledge, with its Delphic undertones (chapters 1 and 3). And, since it was found that the reality of the self at intelligible level remains unimpaired, it seemed essential to venture to the limits of Plotinus' thought, and ask–what of the self in *unio mystica*? Is it annihilated, or can we say of Plotinus that, here too, he stressed the reality of the ego (chapter 4)?

The investigation, thus carried to its logical extreme, underlined the variety and subtlety of the flexible notion of self in Plotinus: a notion at once novel in ancient thought and distinct from modern, idealistic versions (such as Fichte's

Ich). At a time when much energy has been expended to relate Plotinus to a philosophical tradition, and to limit his originality, it seemed valuable to stress this unique aspect of his thought.

1. The Delphic Commandment as Philosophical Propaedeutic

Speaking of the Delphic commandment "Know Thyself", Plotinus says that it applies to those beings who, because of their multiplicity, have the task of learning the number and nature of their parts. They are ignorant of some or all of these, just as they do not know their very principle, and what constitutes their real selves, VI 7, 41,22. Plotinus wishes to stress the contrast between these beings and the One, which has no self-awareness, no intellection, because its pure unity has no need of the self-consciousness which guarantees the identity of, for example, the twofold Intellect with itself, *ibid.*, 19ff. Transcending Being, the One can have no intellection, for "the first and true Intellection is identical with Being," 36. The One suffices for itself: another passage in another treatise explains that this is the primary, essential self-sufficiency of the wholly simple nature, without lack or need of any kind; and to be distinguished from the secondary level of self-sufficiency, which needs itself, and needs to know itself, V 3, 13,17. The latter is the level of Being, not yet alienated from itself, properly speaking, but maintaining its identity in the activity (*energeia*) of its intellection[1] – for it is itself the object of its own intellection, and this activity is necessary to its existence.

Such a necessity can be imputed to pure Being by means of the analysis of its structure in which Plotinus here engages: but it is not self-evident. On the level of human existence, however, it is clear that souls are in a state of alienation from themselves and from their source, V 1, 1,1ff. Yet this state comes from the will to self-possession. Is this a contradiction? No: and precisely because this will to freedom is mistakenly selfish, and means that souls become ignorant of their origin in the Transcendental. If Plotinus had coupled ignorance of one's ruling principle with that of one's real self

in our opening passage, it was because, for him, true self-possession and self-knowledge necessarily involve awareness of one's source.[2] Further, one can say that, for Plotinus, the act of introversion is a conversion towards the source.[3]

Thus the Delphic utterance would apply in a particular way to the human subject in disintegration: its salvation will begin with its "knowing itself", with its regaining of self-possession, in the proper sense. This, in turn, will imply not merely an awareness of one's constituents, but also an openness towards one's source in the hierarchy of which one is a member. Thus Plotinus urges an investigation of the nature of the soul, because it leads to two types of knowledge, of what sphere soul itself is the principle, and what its principles are; and he associates this with "the ordinance of the God who bade us know ourselves", IV 3, 1,1ff. Any investigation of Plotinus' teaching on the self-knowledge of the human self must therefore take account of the relations of the self to its principles, and not confine itself to defining its more immediately apparent characteristics. That this is inherent in Plotinus' own method will become clear when his concern to establish the nature of the "Thyself" of the Delphic formula is delineated.

Porphyry tells us that when he faced the task of editing Plotinus' writings, which "had been issued without consideration of logical sequence", it seemed best to disregard their chronology, and to arrange them systematically in groups of related topics.[4] Of these groups of nine treatises the first, he says, deals with topics of a predominantly ethical tendency, and the opening treatise of the group is called "What is the Animate? What is Man? " Plotinus begins his inquiry by saying that we must find where the emotions like pleasure, fear and desire have their seat, and where the mental and physical acts deriving from these are located: furthermore, reason and opinion, and our acts of intellection, are to be examined, and the examining principle itself should be investigated. What Plotinus is proposing here is none other than an elaborate programme of self-analysis, an enumeration

of one's constituents, which we have seen to be a part of the recovery of self-identity, that task imposed upon all that is multiple and conscious.

Now it was Porphyry's aim as editor to facilitate the reader's introduction to Plotinus by "leading off with the themes presenting the least difficulty".[5] I 1 is, however, one of the more notoriously difficult of any of the treatises, and Richard Harder has convincingly argued that Porphyry's comment applies to the order of the *Enneads* themselves, and not to that of the individual treatises.[6] In general, the ethical topics of the First *Ennead* – the virtues, happiness, evil, beauty – are the most immediately available to the beginner, especially the beginner of antiquity, for whom, as it has been said, philosophy is "an all-embracing activity concerned with everything relevant to the realization of the ultimate purpose of human life"[7] and motivated by a eudaimonistic ethic. Now I 1, insofar as it tries to establish the faculties by which man, constituted as he is, may attain happiness, and, in turn, qualifies the latter in that it is relative to human nature, can undoubtedly be considered as a systematic introduction to ethical questions: but in its complexity, in the variety of themes it touches upon – and which, as will be shown, recur frequently throughout the *Enneads* – it is more. Can we go so far as to call it a preface to the Plotinian *corpus*, even, in Porphyry's eyes (and here he might merely be bringing explicitly to the fore what Plotinus, in scattered treatises and discussions, had suggested), a *philosophical propaedeutic?* Is there an historical tradition of such a propaedeutic? And, if the answers to these questions be in the positive, how does Plotinus introduce and develop such a theme, and integrate it into the fabric of his thought?

An important step towards answering the first question can be made if we take it in conjunction with the second, historical query. Let us look more closely at the text of I 1, 1. Where, asks Plotinus, do the emotions have their seat? He lists three possibilities: in the "soul", in the "soul using a body", or in a "third principle distinct from these". This latter can be either a "mixture" or some new form due to the

"mixture". These alternatives resemble those given on another occasion by Plotinus, when, speaking of man on the level of sense, he says that he is either a *logos*, different from the life-producing soul, or that very soul, or "the soul using the particular body", VI 7, 4,7ff. Now the source of the two possibilities common to both these lists – "soul" and "soul using a body" – is well-known: it is the pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Alcibiades*. There, having said that man is "the principle using the body" (129e), that is, soul in its ruling capacity, the author mentions three possibilities: man is "soul or body or the composite [of both]" (130a); then, systematically disposing of the latter two on the basis of their not being ruling principles, the author is left with the conclusion that confirms his hypothesis – "the soul is man". Basing oneself on arguments developed previously (129b ff.) in the dialogue, one can add "the soul which is man is a soul using the body as an instrument (*organon*)." Plotinus is familiar with the notion,[8] which, following ancient tradition,[9] he attributes to Plato, VI 7, 5,23. The other possibility mentioned by the pseudo-Platonic author, the "composite", will also be important for Plotinus: in I 1, 5,8 it is the name given to the "couplement (*koinon*)",[10] one of the subdivisions of the "third principle" of chapter 1,3 of the same treatise.[11] Interestingly, the term "composite" will be that ultimately accepted in the investigation of VI 7, 4-5, as characterizing man *qua* "soul in a particular *logos*", 5,2ff., although it has already been criticized as an inadequate definition (*logos*) of man.[12] Even the third possibility of the *Alcibiades*, the "body", is not neglected by Plotinus, but he will consider only the "body of a particular kind" (I 1, 4,24), a living, or potentially living body, with the trace (*ichnos*) of soul.[13]

That Plotinus is influenced by the *Alcibiades* is clear. Now in that dialogue Socrates, discussing the prime ethical question, what "art" (*technê*) makes men better, and so happier, suggests that we can never know this so long as we are ignorant of what we ourselves are (128e). And he equates this with the temple inscription of Delphi, "Know Thyself",

a command which has to be fulfilled if we are to know what we should pursue (129a). In other words, self-knowledge, understood in terms of defining the nature of the self of man, is a necessary prelude to any ethical discussion. What we have already seen to be the Plotinian starting-point in philosophy is here anticipated by a writer who may have been active in the Academy in the generation after Plato's death. Furthermore, the characteristic noted in Plotinus, that self-knowledge necessarily involves knowledge of one's principle, is also foreshadowed in the *Alcibiades*. The soul, says Socrates, will know itself, and know that part in which its *aretê*, which is wisdom, resides. This latter is the faculty of *phronêsis*, the most divine aspect of the soul, which is thus godlike, "and whoever contemplates this, and has knowledge of all that is divine – God and *phronêsis* – in this way he will really *know himself*."[14]

In answer to the first question asked above,[15] we can, therefore, at this point of our investigation say that I 1, asking as it does what man is, may be the essential preface not only to what Porphyry calls the "ethical" writings, but also to the *Enneads* as a whole. This has been clarified for us in part by the parallel of the *Alcibiades*, where the definition of man is a prelude to ethics and philosophy in general. And the second question has been partially answered thereby. But there is a tradition of the philosophical interpretation of the Delphic inscription and of the definition of the self, as old as Socrates. This is deserving of some attention in an historical excursus, which will in turn establish the context in which our third, and main question can be dealt with at length.

That the Delphic commandment "Know Thyself" was adopted by philosophers and interpreted by them in primarily ethical fashion, has been pointed out by W. Theiler,[16] who adduces a list of texts from Socrates' day onwards. The passages mentioned by him will be surveyed in the following account, which will extend Theiler's list – on the one hand, by mentioning others, on the other hand, by including those texts dealing with the problem of man's true self. This

problem, insofar as the self investigated is the real self of self-knowledge, is immediately related to the sense of the Delphic maxim in Plotinus (and, indeed, by some of the authors whom we here quote).

Several passages are quoted in an ancient anthology, that compiled by Stobaeus in the twenty-first chapter of his *Florilegium*.[17] Stobaeus includes not merely philosophers like Xenophon, Plato or Porphyry, but also quotes from literary texts, especially of the comic writers Antiphanes (Middle Comedy), Menander, Philemon and Diphilos (New Comedy), whose fondness for ethical maxims is well known, to illustrate the ever-prevalent use of the commandment. The earliest philosopher referred to by Stobaeus is Heraclitus, in a testimony of the gnomologue Aristonymus: "When Heraclitus was a young man, he was wiser than any, because he knew that he knew nothing."[18] The assertion, made also of Chilon, Bias, Demonax and – significantly – Socrates, is clearly a cliché of the ancient tradition: its source is almost certainly Socrates' account in Plato's *Apology*[19] of the Delphic oracle's reply to the query about his wisdom. It was clearly applied to Heraclitus on the basis of the fragment "I investigated myself."[20] Plutarch, indeed, relates it directly to Delphi, quoting the fragment as a paraphrase of "Know Thyself". The relation may have existed between Heraclitus' assertion and the Delphic command[21] – G.S. Kirk speaks of his "ethical advice . . . with which one may compare the Delphic maxims 'Know thyself' and 'Nothing too much'."[22] But it is worthwhile drawing attention to another ancient interpretation of the fragment, which would serve to discount a conscious connection. Diogenes Laertius says of Heraclitus that "he had no teacher, but said that he had searched out himself, and learnt everything by himself,"[23] an account which would underline the extreme independence of mind, and healthy contempt for other men's ideas, so characteristic of the philosopher. The words "I investigated myself" may mean no more than what Diogenes sees in them.

More clearly based upon the Delphic command is the passage in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (IV,ii, 24ff.) where the

notion of self-knowledge is – typically for Xenophon – exclusively ethical and practical in sense. Self-knowledge (25) consists in knowing one's worth in respect of one's usefulness, and of the capability one has in affairs. Ignorance of oneself means not knowing one's capabilities, and (26) brings as many misfortunes upon man as self-knowledge brings him advantages. Among such advantages are success and prestige (28),[24] and the same applies to cities as to individuals (29). Self-knowledge is essential to wisdom (33); nobody can achieve happiness without it (35).

H. Maier[25] believed that this Xenophon passage was influenced by a passage in Plato's *Phaedrus*.[26] Be that as it may, the tenor of the *Phaedrus* passage, and of those other texts in which the Platonic Socrates refers to Delphi and its command, are far removed from the shrewd self-assessment that Xenophon advocates. We have already referred above to Socrates' relation to Delphi as described in the *Apology*, to his "service"[27] of the god Apollo.[28] Aristotle says that the inscription "Know thyself" was the "most divine" of the Delphic inscriptions, and that it became the starting-point of Socrates' philosophical probings.[29] In the early Aristotle, Socrates became, as Jaeger has pointed out, "the restorer of the ethical principle of Apolline religion";[30] for him "Apollinism and Socraticism are the two foci in the development of Greek ethics."[31] But his Apolline mission is already stressed in Plato, and may well have been a feature of the historical Socrates.

Thus, for example, the Socrates of the early *Charmides* identifies the self-knowledge recommended by the Delphic inscription with *sôphrosynê*, the subject studied in that dialogue.[32] In the *Philebus*,[33] on the other hand, the inscription is invoked only to lead to an interesting distinction of the three types of *self-ignorance*, that is of (a) those who consider material things more valuable than their own "essence (*ousia*)"; (b) those who consider bodily goods more valuable than their "truth (*alêtheia*)", and (c) those who *believe* that they are virtuous rather than really *being* so. Essential here is the distinction between "opinion (*doxa*)"

and "truth" or "essence": it is implied that true self-knowledge is knowledge of one's *ontic* or *real* self. Plato was not unaware of this concept of the real self: the term "inner man", in the *Republic*,[34] points to it as well. Thus Socrates in the *Phaedo*[35] distinguishes his concrete, historical self from the self, now embodied, but which will depart after death. In the context of that dialogue, this real self is the immortal soul. This would have been Plato's definition of the self – and thus the author of the early Academy who composed the *First Alcibiades*, discussed in detail above,[36] was faithful to Plato in defining the self – or "man" – as soul.

Reference has already been made to Aristotle's description of the Delphic maxim as "most divine", and his sense of its importance for Socrates' philosophical activity. In the same dialogue (*On Philosophy*), he concerns himself with the source of the command.[37] As Jaeger points out,[38] he goes about this in thoroughly scientific fashion: by trying to settle the history of the building on which the inscription was written. His deductions about the latter's age lead him to conclude that it was a maxim older than Chilon, or any of the seven sages mentioned, or the historical Pythian priestesses he names – in fact, it must emanate from the Pythia herself.[39] No doubt, as Jaeger says, this conclusion served Aristotle's theory that the same truths reoccur in human history several times, that philosophy, particularly in ethical proverbs and maxims,[40] has pre-literary origins.

Of more significance is the study of our real self in another early Aristotelian dialogue, the *Protrepticus*. There,[41] Aristotle, speaking of the soul as a ruling principle, mentions its *logos* as that which, in turn, rules it, and concludes that this is the real self: ψυχὴ μὲν σώματος βέλτιον (ἀρχικώτερον γάρ), ψυχῆς δὲ τὸ λόγον ἔχον καὶ διάνοιαν ... ἤτοι μόνον ἢ μάλιστα ἡμεῖς τὸ μόριον τοῦτο. This formula appears to have been Aristotle's definitive conclusion on the matter, for it occurs at least three times in his mature work, the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Thus[42] ἑαυτοῦ ἕνεκα (τοῦ γὰρ διανοητικοῦ χάριν, ὅπερ ἕκαστος εἶναι δοκεῖ) and τὸν νοῦν ... ὡς τούτου

ἑκάστου ὄντος. F. Dirlmeier[43] remarks that Burnet[44] took such a notion to be Platonic – an opinion with which Dirlmeier concurs.[45] He criticizes, however, Burnet's assertion that such notions – about man's true self as the *dianoêtikon* – are simply received opinion, and not Aristotle's true belief. Now Burnet, writing in 1900, was unaware that the *Protrepticus* passage, quoted above, was Aristotelian: for, despite Bywater's pioneering article of 1869,[46] the examination of the *Protrepticus* of Iamblichus as evidence for Aristotle was not thoroughly carried out until Jaeger wrote his book on Aristotle.[47] Dirlmeier, on the other hand, is in a position to assert that the *Protrepticus* passage is evidence that the notion, although Platonic in origin, was held with conviction by Aristotle.[48]

In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle, discussing the definition of man from a formal view-point,[49] says that man can be defined either as the soul, or as the living being, or conjoint of body and soul. These are logically derived possibilities, closely related to Aristotle's notion of the various types of definition.[50] For our purpose, it is interesting to observe that the definition of man as a "conjoint" is a forerunner of what we have called the man of historical process in Plotinus – the other definition is, of course, the Platonic one.[51]

For the Stoa, with its rejection of the immaterial soul in favour of the life-giving *pneuma*, whose highest aspect, the intellectual *hêgemonikon*, is apparent in man, it is clear that the real man consists in this *pneuma*. This must be the sense of the Cleanthes fragment identifying "soul alone" with man.[52] Here the soul is bodily, but in the special sense in which, as O. Gigon[53] reminds us, the latter term has for the Stoa. More nuanced are the statements of the eclectic Cicero. Thus he can on one occasion define the self as *mens*: "mens cuiusque is est quisque,"[54] a formula which seems identical with the passages from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. On another occasion, he refers explicitly to the Delphic command, and brings this into relation with the question of what faculty can know itself:

est illud quidem vel maximum animo ipso animum

> videre, et nimirum hanc habet vim praeceptum Apollinis, quo monet, ut se quisque noscat . . . cum igitur "nosce te" dicit, hoc dicit, "nosce animum tuum" . . . ab animo tuo quidquid agitur, id agitur a te.[55]

Now self as *animus* would appear to be different from self as *mens*, just as *psychê* differs from *nous*. But it would be rash to over-differentiate in Cicero's case. For in the first passage, in which he speaks of self as *mens*, he substitutes self = *mens* for *animus* ("sic fragile corpus animus sempiternus movet"), and both passages here quoted are followed by the same translation from the *Phaedrus*,[56] so that Cicero is clearly thinking of *soul* as self here, perhaps of the Stoic soul, that unity of reason and life-giving force. On the other hand, if Theiler's suggestion[57] is correct, it is possible that Cicero, in speaking of *animus* and then of *mens* in the same context, was under the influence of a late Stoic tendency, which Theiler ascribes to Poseidonius, of distinguishing more sharply between the *hêgemonikon* and the vital soul, or *pneuma*. This distinction is clear in Marcus Aurelius, 2,2: ὅ τί ποτε τοῦτο, ὅ εἰμι, σαρκία ἐστὶ καὶ πνευμάτιον καὶ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν. 12,3: τρία ἐστίν, ἐξ ὧν συνέστηκας· σωμάτιον, πνευμάτιον, νοῦς. τούτων τἆλλα μέχρι τοῦ ἐπιμελεῖσθαι δεῖν σά ἐστι· τὸ δὲ τρίτον μόνον κυρίως σόν. In the latter passage[58] there can be no doubt: self is *nous*. Now Cicero may, in speaking of *mens*, have had this new interpretation in mind: the survival of *animus*, however, would indicate the novelty of distinguishing *mens* (or *nous*) from the rest of the soul in Stoic circles.

The importance of obeying the Delphic command as a prelude to philosophy is first stressed explicitly by Alexander
* of Aphrodisias, in his commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima*,[59] δεῖ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων απάντων πείθεσθαι τοῖς προσταττομένοις ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν . . . ὡς διὰ τῆς αὑτοῦ γνώσεως ἑκάστῳ περιεσομένου τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν βίου, ἡ δ' ἑαυτοῦ γνῶσις ἐν τῇ γνώσει τῇ καθ' ὅ ἐστιν αὑτός, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπος. The possible influence of not only the notion of a prelude to philosophy, but also of a

* Corrigenda: delete 'commentary on Aristotle's'

definition of the self, as here given, on Plotinus, must be reckoned with.[60] We know that Alexander was read in Plotinus' circle,[61] and in recent years a number of interesting and convincing studies has been made, showing his influence on Plotinus to have been of significance.[62] As for Alexander's definition here, it is, of course, conditioned by the commentary he is writing. "Knowledge of the soul is * necessary, as it is the real man: hence the value of Aristotle's *De Anima*, on which I am about to write" – such is his implied argument. Nor should we forget that Aristotle, as in the passages from the *Metaphysics* mentioned above, can call the real self "soul".

Porphyry, whose concern with the importance, for Plotinus, of the problem of the real self led him, as we have seen, to place the treatise which asks "What is the Animate? What is Man?" at the beginning of his master's works, was himself aware of the philosophical richness of the Delphic maxim. He was the author of a work in at least four books entitled Περὶ τοῦ γνῶθι σεαυτόν.[63] Three extracts from this work are preserved for us by Stobaeus.[64] In the first of these, which probably derives very largely from Aristotle, is contained that question on the human or divine origin of the maxim: from it the passage from Aristotle's *On Philosophy*, discussed above,[65] has been reconstructed. In the second extract Porphyry identifies the knowledge referred to in the maxim with knowledge of *nous*, of man's real self or essence, δεῖ πάλιν γνῶναι τὴν οὐσίαν ἡμῶν ἥ τις ἐστίν. Such knowledge is the beginning of true philosophy, which proceeds from knowledge of self to that of the "all" or "whole", but which is ultimately subordinate to its end, *eudaimonia*, ἡ γὰρ τεῦξις τῆς ὄντως οὔσης οὐσίας ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ ταύτης ἀληθὴς γνῶσις σοφίας ἦν τεῦξις, εἴ γε σοφίας ἴδιον ἡ τῆς ὄντως οὐσίας τῶν πραγμάτων ἀληθὴς ἐπιστήμη, διὰ σοφίας δὲ ἡ τῆς τελείας εὐδαιμονίας γίγνεται κτῆσις.

In the third extract Porphyry stresses that "we" are also this visible phenomenon, the "external" or descended man, and that to this man the command to self-knowledge also applies. He distinguishes between τὸ γιγνώσκειν ἑαυτόν (of

* Corrigenda: change 'the commentary he is writing' to 'his Aristotelian allegiance (Alexander, *De An.* 2. 7 ff.)'

soul and *nous* — our essence) and τὸ πάντῃ γιγνώσκειν ἑαυτόν (including not merely ourselves but also what is ours):[66] τὸ μὲν οὖν γιγνώσκειν ἑαυτὸν τὴν ἀναφορὰν ἔοικεν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τὸ γιγνώσκειν δεῖν τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὸν νοῦν, ὡς ἐν τούτῳ ἡμῶν οὐσιωμένων· τὸ δὲ πάντῃ γιγνώσκειν ἑαυτὸν συμπεριλαμβάνειν ἔοικεν ἡμᾶς καὶ τὰ ἡμέτερα καὶ τὰ τῶν ἡμετέρων. What this latter type of "complete" self-knowledge consists in is suggested: καὶ πάλιν πάντῃ γνῶναι ἑαυτόν, ἵνα καὶ ὁ ἐντὸς ἀθάνατος γνωσθῇ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ ἐκτὸς εἰκονικὸς μὴ ἀγνοηθῇ καὶ τὰ τούτοις διαφέροντα γνώριμα γένηται. διαφέρει μὲν γὰρ τῷ ἐντὸς παντέλειος νοῦς, ἐν ᾧ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπος, οὗ εἰκὼν ἕκαστος ἡμῶν· διαφέρει δὲ τῷ ἐκτὸς εἰδώλῳ τὰ περὶ τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὰς κτήσεις. Ultimately, Porphyry concludes, it is only through possession of knowledge of both types that a truly balanced and appropriate vision of man's condition is possible.

The following chapters will show that several of these themes occur in Plotinus. Of particular importance is the notion that self-knowledge, though primarily of the noetic self, is not confined to it, but includes the *eikonikos*, the individual, or self of historical process. Chapter 2 seeks to demonstrate that this is a Plotinian notion. The view of Porphyry's that self-knowledge is the starting-point of philosophy, substantiated in the extracts quoted above, is reinforced by his choice of the late Plotinian treatise on the Animate and Man as the systematic introduction to the *Enneads*.[67]

We possess late Neoplatonic commentaries by Proclus and Olympiodorus on the *Alcibiades*. We also possess evidence that in the fifth and sixth centuries the programme of Platonic studies at Athens and Alexandria included the *Alcibiades* as an introduction to philosophy.[68] At the beginning of Proclus' commentary[69] we find the now familiar themes of the philosophical propaedeutic, of self-knowledge as knowledge of one's essence (*ousia*), of such knowledge as the *sine qua non* of human perfection – themes which by Proclus' time were clearly an accepted part of the Platonic school-tradition. Thus 1,3: τῶν Πλατωνικῶν

διαλόγων καὶ πάσης, ὡς εἰπεῖν, τῆς φιλοσόφου θεωρίας ἀρχὴν κυριωτάτην καὶ βεβαιοτάτην εἶναι νομίζομεν τὴν τῆς ἑαυτῶν οὐσίας διάγνωσιν ... 7: πέφυκε γὰρ ἑκάστῳ τῶν ὄντων, ὥσπερ τὸ εἶναι διάφορον, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἡ τελειότης τοῖς μὲν ἄλλη, τοῖς δὲ ἄλλη, κατὰ τὴν τῆς οὐσίας ὕφεσιν. The theme of the different "goods" attributable to the different classes of being is then developed. The Delphic inscription at the *entrance* to the shrine signifies that self-knowledge is the necessary prelude to philosophy: 5,9, ὁ μὲν γνοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀφ' ἑστίας ἀρξάμενος συνάπτεσθαι δύναται θεῷ τῷ τῆς ὅλης ἀληθείας ἐκφαντικῷ καὶ ἡγεμόνι τῆς καθαρτικῆς ζωῆς. Turning to the Platonic writings (5,13), and remarking that Socrates described himself as Apollo's "priestly servitor", Proclus says that the *Alcibiades* fulfils most perfectly the Apolline command to self-knowledge. The *Phaedrus* is also quoted:[70] the whole is a rich survey of the "Delphic motif" in the Platonic Socrates.

There is, therefore, a philosophical tradition of interpreting the Delphic command "Know Thyself" and relating it to the problem of man's true self. What we have isolated as a philosophical propaedeutic in Plotinus is present, in varying degrees, in Greek thought from Socrates to Proclus. In the latter's day, it has become formalized by the use of the *Alcibiades* as a philosophical primer. We can now turn to examine in detail the final questions asked above:[71] how does Plotinus develop the themes of *self* and *self-knowledge*, and what is their place in his thought?

2. The Self and the Soul

This chapter will investigate Plotinus' statements on the constitution of the historical self. In the following pages, and throughout the rest of this work, these statements will be considered in their chronological order. We believe that it is thereby possible to gain some interesting insights into the unfolding of Plotinus' thought: if we speak of "development" in his thought, it is in the sense which P. P. Matter intends, when he speaks of an "innere Entfaltung"of Plotinus' philosophy, "das immer wieder in der auf frühere Einsichten *zurückgreifenden Weiterführung* bestimmter Gedanken besonders deutlich in seiner Eigenart heraustritt."[1] Matter stresses that Plotinus' thought does not develop in the sense that he radically recasts or rejects formerly held views:[2] it is not a development of revolutionary nature, as, for example, Plato's in his theory of Ideas. Matter himself has shown that the system of the hypostases is not entirely unfolded at the beginning, but is gradually constructed in the first eleven treatises.[3] If, with him, we believe in a "development" in Plotinus–against the general opinion of scholars[4] – it is in this qualified sense.

It is assumed in Plotinus that the individual self exists: the process of individualization, of the outgoing of individual souls from the All-Soul, guarantees this. Such an assumption can be observed in an early treatise, III 1[3]. There, in chapter 4,21 ff., Plotinus, speaking against the Stoa-inspired notion of a world-unity, says that if it were as the Stoics maintain, then "we are no 'We'", using the term for "self" – *hêmeis* – which he himself has coined. Nothing would be ours, he continues, nor would we reason "as ourselves"[5] in such a situation. Similarly, in chapter 5,20 ff., polemizing against undue astrological influences, he says that "we must be allowed our own," and that a distinction must be made

between "what we do ourselves, and we undergo of necessity".[6] These passages attest to the reality of the self which is there in Plotinus' thought from the start: "we" are separate entities, who think and act "for ourselves".

In an early passage, Plotinus discusses what "we" may be. It is a question of whether everyone of us is mortal or immortal, IV 7[2], 1,1 ff. Of the "us" Harder comments[7] that it is "terminologisch 'der Mensch'". Subsequently it is replaced by the term "man": Harder notes that *hêmeis* is "Offenbar Schulsprache: bei Plotin stehender, reich differenzierter Sprachgebrauch." There can be no doubt that Plotinus consciously uses the term right from the beginning of his literary activity. In the following sentences of the passage, it is said that "man is not a thing of one element only", but has soul and body, the latter either as an "instrument (*organon*)"[8] or attached in some other way. The divisible, decomposing body is then shown to be clearly mortal: if it is a part of us, then we are not wholly immortal. But it is just as likely to be merely our tool, then as matter to the form of the real, authentic man, and so not as essential "part", even though we describe it as "part of us". In either case, asserts Plotinus, in conclusion, the soul is the real self.[9]

In this early passage, Plotinus accepts, in substance, the traditional Platonic definition of the self. The definition of the *Alcibiades* is maintained, with confidence. There is no attempt to include the notion of the embodied self (what will subsequently be called "the composite") in the definition. Yet the passage is curiously relevant to the later beliefs of Plotinus: several of the key terms, which, in themselves, are to facilitate the transformation of his thought, occur here – *hêmeis, anthrôpos, autos*. Nor is the phrase "part of us" to be unimportant: it will be a major problem of the later treatises to decide to what extent things "of ours" can be said to be inherent in the identity of the self.[10]

The treatises following upon IV 7 do not deal directly with the notion of "self". True, IV 8[6] speaks of individual souls, especially in chapters 4 ff., where their *apostasis* from the intelligible whole in the realm of partial existents (4,19

ff.) is dealt with, and where it is said that we are "amphibious", living in both the transcendent and the incarnate spheres (4,32). But the implications of this "double life" are to be discussed in a later context: closer to our purpose are certain remarks in the treatise on "Our Tutelary Spirit", III 4, [15]. Having said (1,1 ff.) that Soul, in contradistinction to the other hypostases, which remain at rest while their products come into being, creates *by its motion*, and, echoing the *Phaedrus* (2,2 ff.), creates in various forms – the sensitive (*aisthêtikon*), the reasoning (*logikon*) and vegetative (*phytikon*) – Plotinus asserts that the phase of soul dominant in each form carries out its characteristic end: the others remain idle, "being external". This principle is now applied to the soul of man. In man, says Plotinus, the lower – and by this he means the *phytikon* – is not supreme: but it is nonetheless an accompaniment. Nor is the higher – here the *logikon* – alone supreme, for man lives in part by sensation, and, insofar as his body grows and propagates, by his vegetative principle, too. All phases collaborate, but *the entire being, man, takes rank according to that which dominates in him*, κατὰ δὲ τὸ κρεῖττον τὸ ὅλον εἶδος ἄνθρωπος. We are here confronted with a notion of the self in which ethical and ontological elements interact. What Plotinus is, in fact, saying is that we are what we have made ourselves to be, by our dominant pursuits, by the type of life – determined in turn by the phase of soul – according to which we have chosen to live. This ethical moment assumes, in the following, an objective form: for Plotinus relates it to the fate of the soul after death. In a subsequent existence, the soul – or self – assumes the identity appropriate to the rank attained to in this life. Those who have kept to the human level are men once more – the "human level" being, presumably, the *logikon*, "according to which" the being is "man" (this version of line 10 need not contradict that given above: the phrase is ambiguous, in a positive sense, for, on the one hand, "that which dominates" determines the type of man, and on the other, it is the reasoning phase that first brings the essentially human to light). Those who live wholly

sensually become animals: one might say that they "are" animals already in this life, never realizing their rational potential. And according to their characters, animals of different types. There are even those whose active principle was primarily vegetative, and these become plants.

But these details of transmigration of souls interest us only insofar as the determination of one's self – to remain as man, or either to transcend one's "humanity" or sink below it – is clearly shown to be a choice devolving upon man himself. The soul's power of choice is stressed in chapter 5 of the treatise, where the Platonic allegory[11] of the soul's choice of life in the higher world, previous to existence here, is said to be an expression of the soul's inherent tendency and disposition. Plotinus is, however, faced with the difficulty that embodiment seems to have a detrimental effect on soul, or that, conversely, a vicious soul can corrupt a good body. He insists, however, on the efficacy of the soul's activity when its decision is made with its entirety (line 14). Similarly, the "guiding spirit" or *daimôn* which each of us possesses by his own choice (chapter 3,8) – for it is the Prior which stands above the individual spirit, the next stage in the hierarchy, to which one aspires: in modern terms, one's "ideal" – this spirit is neither entirely outside of us, nor bound up with us: it is "ours", as belonging to the soul, but "not insofar as we are particular human beings living a life to which it is superior" (5,20 ff.). Finally, the essential individuality, and freedom of man as individual, is appealed to in the impressive allegory of chapter 6,46 ff. The soul returning to this sphere embarks on the "ship of the universe"[12] in "the seat of the lot of life", to partake in the voyage of the "Universal Circuit", an Odyssey of varied sights, experiences and adventures to which it is exposed on the sea-tossed vessel. Yet it acts of itself, too, through its "particular impulse",[13] because it is a passenger in its own individual way.

In this context, then, we find evidence for a notion of the self as that which determines man's existence. This aspect of Plotinus' notion of self has been characterized by W.

Himmerich as "das Vermögen der Ortung seelischen Seins, welches die Entscheidung trifft, auf welchem Niveau des Seins der Mensch lebt. Er kann auf animalischem, auf geistigem und auf transzendentalem Niveau leben."[14] The accuracy of the last phrase, or rather its *comprehensive* nature, will be subsequently questioned, but there can be no doubt that it illustrates another quality of the self aptly instanced by Himmerich, its "Spontaneität, in der die Notwendigkeit von Entscheidung mit einem Spielraum von Freiheit der Entscheidung koinzidiert."[15] The philosophical reader will, however, ask himself: what is the basis of this spontaneity, this freely choosing faculty which determines the level of man's existence?

We must recall that it was from an investigation of the forms which the soul's activity may take that Plotinus started to develop his notion of the levels of self (chapters 2 and 5). It is precisely in the nature of the soul that the answer to the above question lies: "for the soul's nature includes many things, indeed everything, the higher and the lower, insofar as life in any form exists," 3,21 ff. Each of us is an "intelligible universe" linked both to this world and to its intelligible prototype – a dimension, this latter, to be explored later – what is important is that our souls, containing as they do the possibility of every manifestation of life, are not only an intelligible universe, but "a subordination of various forms like that of the Cosmic Soul", 6,23. This could be concluded from a thesis of Plotinus', already established by him when he was writing III 4, namely, that of the unicity of the soul.[16] If all souls are one, then each individual soul may be expected to reproduce the characteristics common to all and to the Cosmic Soul, with which they are one. Their differentiation, which makes them many, will not consist in their having different faculties, to the exclusion of others, or in their being separate in any way from the totality of psychic activity. All souls being all things, each will be differentiated "according to its operative phase", which, in turn, is determined by the object of each soul's vision.[17] Plotinus here says of the soul what is said above of the self or

man. There is, however, no indication that he has, as yet, specified in III 4 the equation of self with soul made already as early as in IV 7, 1. The rational nature of man is, however, stressed, and his relationship with *nous*, as well as the One – for the "good man" has either *nous* or *theos* (the One) as his presiding spirit – is mentioned in the context of self-identity. But above all, the treatise introduces us to the fundamental notion of a responsible, fluctuating faculty in man, as yet identified with soul, yet ranging the intelligible and psychic universes, and capable even of debasing itself – or being debased – below the properly human level.

It is again the thesis of the unicity of soul which is Plotinus' next starting-point for an investigation of the nature of the self. In VI 4[22], 14,1 ff., he asks how can there be a particular soul of the individual if there is one soul at every point. The answer is prepared in the concept of an "intelligible whole" at once "one and unlimited ... with everything – all life and all soul – as one together". It is a primal unity, nor does individuality occur there, the individual souls being eternally what they are. Things of process approach and merge with this primal unit, 15. What then are "we", asks Plotinus, using the term which appeared in IV 7, but which will from now on dominate his thinking on the self. Are we the higher primal, or that which approaches and begins in time? Before we existed here, he answers, we had existence in the transcendent; upon that primal Man, a member of the intelligible, has intruded "another man", who seeks to come into being. He has wound himself around us, adjoining himself to the man that each of us was at first.

Thus our "real self" is located in a transcendent phase, prior to "our" existence here on earth, and this because we are soul, one of the *theia* (V 1, 7,49). Yet the self of the realm of process is also "man", aspiring to that state, and transforming our nature here: for "we" have become the combination of both, neither simply the Higher, nor simply the Lower.[18] Here is clearly stressed the effect of the human condition upon the self – a notion already implicit in the statement, quoted above, that we are "amphibious"[19] and

suggested also at I 2[19], 6,3 ff., where it is said that the man who strives "to be god" has a twofold nature: he is "god and *daimôn*" – or rather a god with another, conjoined lower power – if there is any involuntary influence, coming from outside the real self, on his actions. What is there a moment in the life of man, that wrongdoing which, in Socratic terms, is ignorance, and so unwilled, becomes in our text an existential determinant of man. And this determinant, more fully precise than hitherto, is clearly distinguished from the "higher", unchanging self. From now on, Plotinus will devote a not inconsiderable part of his attention to examining, ever more exactly, and with greater nuances of complexity, the empirical self of the human condition.

The first fruits of that examination may be seen in the section of that long treatise entitled *Problems of the Soul* (IV 3 and 4 [27 and 28], which is devoted to the problem of memory. Plotinus establishes, in chapters 25 and 26, that it is, properly speaking, a "fact of the soul", but the problem remains, of what soul, the more divine, that constitutive of ourselves, or "that other which springs from the All", by which is meant what Theiler has called "die den Menschen in den Zwang des Alls verstrickende Seele".[20] Plotinus answers tentatively that both have memories, personal and shared, which are one when the two souls are together; when they separate, and still continue to exist and endure, each retains for a longer period its own memories, for a shorter time that of the other. Thus the *eidôlon* of Hercules in Hades[21] remembers the activities of his life, "since that life was mainly of the hero's personal shaping", 9; and this *eidôlon*, in Plotinus' opinion, is also to be considered as "we", as "the characteristically human part". The other souls in Hades,[22] themselves "the composite" – here most likely in the sense of a combination of the two soul-phases, divine and *eidôlon* – speak merely of the events of their lives here. But Homer does not tell us what Hercules' *real self*, freed of this *eidôlon*, recounts: this *real* Hercules is one with the "more divine soul" of lines 1 f., it is the "freed and isolated soul" of line 15.

Thus far the paraphrase of Plotinus' words. They are rich in implications for our theme. To begin with, the "more divine" soul, which is the real Hercules, and the *eidôlon* or historical Hercules, stand in the same relation as the "man in the transcendent" and "the other man" of VI 4, 14. We have said that, subsequent to the distinction applied in that passage, Plotinus was to become more precise in his description of the "later self". The *eidôlon*-notion does clarify in what this self consists. The qualified, even adulterated presence of the real, transcendent self there can be equated with the presence of an *eidôlon*. This latter is, however, no wraith-like figure, no shade of Homeric vagueness: it is, after all, "we", in a sense, the self. If the human condition was described as ambivalent previously, its latter, historical manifestation is here implicitly integrated into its essential components. From this follows an attempt, perhaps marginal in Plotinus, but nonetheless significant, to describe the *historical personality*. For it was the life of the *eidôlon* that was, above all, Hercules' own: this because, as I 1, 12,31 ff., clarifies, Hercules "was a man of action, not a philosopher" – he was a hero plunged into the immediacy of action. The transcendent Hercules – of whom, as Plotinus remarks playfully, Homer says nothing – will, we learn, tend to forget, or to remember only passively (32,3). This seems to mean that the higher soul is selective in its retention of impressions, only the best of which pass over from the lower phase to it. Plotinus compares this to "our" – here the philosopher's – limited acceptance of the conversation and ideas of less worthy associates, chapter 31,18 ff.

Yet the philosopher that Hercules failed to be (I 1, 12,37) – or, as chapter 32,27 says, the "sage", who is "in the intelligible" and "above Hercules" – remains the exception among men. He will not remember even the fact that he has philosophized or had contemplation of the transcendent realm here below, IV 4, 1,4 f. Nor will he have any memory of his personality, *ibid.*, 2,1 ff., no notion that "the contemplator is the self", for example, "Socrates". The full implication of this absence of self-awareness is discussed

below: for the present, our concern is with the "man of action" whose worthy representative in this context is that Hercules who, in Hades, would still speak of his heroic deeds, IV 3, 32,24.

Thus memory, for Plotinus, is, as Bréhier comments, "dans l'âme mais non pas dans l'âme purifiée de tout contact avec le corps".[23] Memory, he adds, "n'a . . . sa place que dans une vie fragmentée, assaillie sans cesse d'impressions nouvelles et de besoins sans cesse renaissants".[24] Be this as it may, Plotinus dwells with emphasis upon the reality of the *eidôlon*, its contribution to selfhood, and its effectiveness as the repository of personality. Nor is he, as we have noted, insensitive to the notion that certain memories of the latter phase are retained: in other words, that personality may play a limited part in the formation of the real man *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Yet this part must not be overstressed. Ultimately, Plotinus will reject the notion of the personality's importance. For, on the world stage, the acting of individual lives is not a function of the real, interior self, but of the shadow it projects, III 2[47], 15,47 ff. Such is the *eidôlon*: whoever takes its activity for something serious is like an actor so entirely identified with his rôle that he lays aside his mask[25] and behaves *as if his action were real*. Now it is not: if Socrates takes part in the play it is as the "external Socrates".

Socrates here is the opposite of Hercules at IV 3, 27 ff. For if the latter is filled with the importance of his own exploits, it is only because, as Plotinus says, he knows "no more than to live the lower and outer life", and such a man is himself a "futility", III 2, 15,51. And yet the *eidôlon* is "we": how is this? Plotinus is here doing no more than apply the thesis of III 4, that the self *qua* soul is a spontaneously moving faculty, *freely determining* the destiny of man. If Hercules does not free himself from his *eidôlon*, his "higher soul" will be where this latter is, VI 4, 16,40 f.; in other words, he may be said not to have realized the full potentiality of his self – here symbolized by the passing of

the authentic soul into the Intelligible. But he "is" on the lower level, for what that is worth. There is, in other words, no other possible explanation of why Plotinus, at IV 3, 27,8, asserts the selfhood of the *eidôlon* than to see it as an application of the determination principle of III 4, 2.[26]

It is noteworthy that in a later passage of the same treatise on problems of the soul, IV 4, 18, Plotinus deals with the identity of that human phase which is inferior to the *eidôlon* or embodied soul – namely, the ensouled body. Has it, he asks, any force of its own, any individuality which it would be in possession of upon the soul's incoming? It has some shadow of soul and with this is a modified body.[27] This body, so modified, is the seat of pain and pleasure, which enter our awareness without affecting it: by "our" or "we" (*hêmeis*) are meant the "other soul", the remaining, higher aspects of the soul, its sensitive and reasoning parts, III 4, 2,4. That the "we" is this higher soul was established since IV 7[2]1: indeed, Plotinus here repeats a definition of the self there stressed, that "we" are the "master-principle":

IV, 7, 1,22	IV, 4, 18,14
τὸ δὲ κυριώτατον καὶ	ἡμεῖς δὲ κατὰ
αὐτὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος	τὸ κύριον

a form of definition deriving from Aristotle.[28] In this respect, he adds nothing new in the passage under consideration. What he does add, however, is a modified conception of the relation of the body to the self. We recall that, at IV 7, 1,20 ff., the idea that the body could be a part of us in any essential way was dismissed: it is no more than matter to the soul's form, or the latter's instrument.[29] Here, Plotinus, having pointed out what we are, adds that the modified body is not, however, alien to "us", to the self. For the self, he proceeds, is neither the body, nor is it purified of it; but the body is dependent on the self, attached to it, and, in a special sense, it is part of the self.

If at IV 3, 27,8 the *eidôlon*, the soul at the level of personality, which, as we have seen, survives in a certain way the death of the total man, was considered as an aspect of the

self, then Plotinus here (IV 4, 18) defines the latter in even more comprehensive terms: we, he says, are not purified of the body, it is "ours", it contributes to the totality called "self". The formula of the *Alcibiades*, shown to have been Plotinus' guide in IV 7, 1, is surpassed: the realm of emotion, of passion is integrated into the definition of the self. It is not without coincidence that the "modified body" here evoked is equated with the soul of Aristotle's *De Anima*:[30] the psychology of that treatise, based upon the substantial unity of soul and body, in which soul is the formative principle inherent in the bodily organism, has left its trace in Plotinus' detailed evaluation of the nature of the body.

Yet the modified body is assigned (with typical Platonic insistence) to a relatively low position by Plotinus, lines 16 ff. We are affected by its emotions, he says, the more, in proportion as we are weaker, not detached, seeing in body the most worthy phase of our being, the real man. The last remark is important: Plotinus believes that it is possible for man to be deluded as to his true nature. His emotional phase is, indeed, a part of his self, but it is neither the highest nor the essentially human part. The more the self penetrates into this, the more it approximates to it, to the exclusion of anything higher. Ultimately, it *is* "the man", because it is his *dominant* (III 4, 2,10), it is what he has, mistakenly, *made himself to be*.[31]

A closer analysis of the structure of the modified body follows, lines 19 ff. The affections are a state of this, which is a "conjoint and composite thing" – they cannot be states of those impassive entities, pure body and pure soul,[32] but of the conjoint of two natures, of which the lower will have but a faint trace of the higher. This conjoint is at once unity and duality, a mean, troubled, artificial and uncertain, shifting upwards and downwards in the scale between its own deficiency[33] and longing for communion with the higher.

It is a characteristic of the self that it manifests itself, at various levels, as a mean or middle phase between two extremes. This will be seen to be the case of that aspect of reasoning soul which "we" most truly are:[34] it is here the

case with the "composite", the ensouled body. The probable development – analytical, not chronological – of this factor can be traced. At III 2 [47], 8,9 ff., it is asserted that man is situated between the gods and the beasts, and that he inclines, now to the one, now to the other. The majority of men remains, however, "in the middle"; but the corrupt, like beasts, harass them. It is more than likely that consideration of the mean position of man in the hierarchy god-man-beast establishes it as appropriate, or typical, that essentially human characteristics are revealed as the *medial and mediating* tensions between conflicting and diverging opposites. It has been pointed out by Himmerich[35] that the self is "Mittel – und Mittlerinstanz zwischen Sinnlichkeit und Geist", a truth not yet fully explained by Plotinus: in the present context, however, the *motif* is apparent on a lower level. We shall return to this later on, in some detail: before passing on to a new problem, however, attention should be drawn to a passage following closely upon IV 4, 18, and curiously akin to III 2, 8,9 ff.: i.e., II 9 [33], 2,4 ff. It concerns the human soul, one part of which is ever in intelligible reality, one part concerned with the things of this world and one part in between.[36] Since the soul is one nature with many powers,[37] sometimes the whole of it is carried along with the best of itself, sometimes the worst or lowest part is degraded, and thus degrades *the middle* with it. What man was in III 2, 8 is attributed to the middle phase here: this can incline in either of two opposed tendencies. Plotinus does not specifically identify the middle phase with self (or man) in II 9, 2: but as A.H. Armstrong has pointed out,[38] it is but a step from the isolation of the peculiarities of the middle phase to its identification with the "we" or true self.[39]

Since IV 3, 27 ff. we have observed that Plotinus pays increasing attention to the reality of the historical self and its association with (and even inclusion in) the real self. It is interesting to observe how this gradually introduced notion receives formal and explicit proof in a short argument. At VI 6 [34], 15,10 ff. Plotinus asserts that Man – the real Man

– and the other living things exist in the intelligible "insofar as they have Being", and furthermore, insofar as this intelligible All is a living thing,[40] it is *complete*: even man in the realm of sense is a part of it. Likewise, every living thing, *qua living* thing, exists transcendentally in it.[41] Behind these assertions lies an argument that may be presented as follows: Man *qua* Being, living Being, is in the intelligible. Now the intelligible is a living thing, and so the complete Living-Form (*Lebewesen*): if this is so, it cannot lack any form or manifestation of life. Now historical man is alive: therefore, historical man can be said to be in the intelligible, living Reality.

The argument is unequivocal, but it raises a major problem, one created by the very hierarchy of Platonism itself, namely, if "we" can be said to be the embodied soul, the modified body, how can sensibility – the nature and activity of the senses – be related positively to man's *essentia* in Being? For if the senses are *accidentalia* of temporal man, foreign to his real self, as a Platonist might maintain, then one cannot include in the self the man of the sense realm. Plotinus was acutely aware of this problem, and he devoted a major part of one of his most comprehensive treatises to it: VI 7 [38], 1-10.[42] Not that the problem was totally foreign to the Platonic tradition, which, paradoxically, was in some respects better fitted to debate it than Aristotelianism.[43] For it was a *quaestio vexata* of Platonism since the *Parmenides* (130c) whether there were Forms of what F. M. Cornford has called "undignified things",[44] such as Hair, Clay or Dirt. In an early treatise, V 9 [5], 10,1 ff., Plotinus had denied that there were Forms of such things. We know that he was following in this the Middle Platonic tradition, as typified by Albinus.[45] His attitude will be different in the present treatise, which we must now examine in detail.

The treatise starts from the assumption that there appears to be a certain "provision" relating man to his environment, since man is provided with sense powers and organs for dealing with the latter. Is this due to a reflective, planning act of the divine creator? A consideration of the reflective act

(*logismos*, 1,20) leads to the conclusion that it, and provision, serve only where a higher, more comprehensive power is lacking, or where choice or preference are present: such terms, therefore, can be used only analogously of "the alone and one and utterly simplex" – line 39 – whose complete act (46) establishes what is appropriate. This is no planning process, for anything of God's must be "whole and entire", the future totally present in it – even if, in time, it assumes extension. The All is "a single total fact", 57: "*it contains its cause within itself*."

Chapter 1 is clearly an application of the formally described noetic "whole" (*holon*) of VI 4 and 5 [22 and 23] to the problem of divine foresight: the latter is meaningless when all things are present in God. Plotinus now isolates one factor of this *total presence* (see the above italicized words): the presence of the cause in the intelligible essence, an inherent aspect of it, to be identified with it. As he says: "the thing and its cause are the same", chapter 2,10. Or, modifying the emphasis, "the essence of a thing is its cause" (15). Thus an explicative examination of the intelligible Form will reveal the cause inherent in it (17 ff.). Even in this visible universe (30 ff.) such coincidence of cause and being is apparent in its very totality, in the interlocking of co-existence (37), where parts are related to the whole, and where this relationship is the ground of their being.[46] The principle applies to man: of intelligible man it can, of course, be said that his essence is his *raison d'être* (chapter 2,6; cf. 11, 51 ff.). But – and this is the crux of the problem – what of historical man (56)?

Once again, it is in an application of the principle of total presence that Plotinus seeks an answer. He says that things are "beautiful" when their cause is inherent in them,[47] chapter 3,9. And, he adds, in transition to the sphere of process, *a thing is beautiful, when it is comprehensive or complete*. Now this implies its possession of its cause, as the argument suggests: Plotinus can therefore conclude syllogistically that to state a thing's cause is to state the completeness of its nature. Thus of any individual part of the

human body – eye or eyebrow – one can give its *raison d'être* by referring it to the totality of the complete body. The latter's essential integrity implies the presence of all its parts. As J. Trouillard says, "Chaque propriété est relation à l'ensemble, lui-même fondé sur sa propre vérité interne."[48]

But in the case of the human person this "vérité interne", its completeness, is due to the Form controlling its matter, due, therefore, to some intelligible, chapter 3,10 ff. But the latter, as we have seen, is one, all-embracing, "the being, the essence, the cause, all are one", 21 f. Hence we must conclude that sense-perception, peculiar to the human person, is necessarily involved in the intelligible, in virtue of the latter's completeness, 22 f. Because this intelligible essence is a "loi enveloppante et concrète",[49] man in the transcendent is not pure *nous*, sense-perception being an additional accident foreign to his nature and made upon his entry into the realm of process, 26 ff. Man here below, we might conclude, is essentially already in the transcendent.

Now this was the conclusion of a passage already discussed above.[50] There too, it was shown that the man of the sense realm, *qua* living being, was part of the Total Living Being. Likewise, the turning-point of the argument there was the *completeness* of the Intelligible Being. What was there a logically derived argument, which bypassed the problem of sense and essence, emerges in our present treatise as the complex result of a long dialectical process, which began by facing up to that very problem. Such passages serve to qualify the notion of "development" which we maintain in this work,[51] and point to the no less impressive *integrity* of some of Plotinus' notions,[52] which are already fully developed in his treatises *ab initio*.

To return to the examination of VI 7. Before he can develop the grandiose theme of the presence of all life in the Intelligible, Plotinus is arrested by the apparent contradiction between his assertion that the sense realm is in the Intelligible, and the traditionally Platonic notion that only upon the soul's *debasement* in the sense-world does this potentiality become an actuality. The exact nature of man is

thrown into confusion by his new argumentation; one must investigate, he says, not only what man in the Intelligible consists of, but also the nature of man in process, chapter 4,3. Thus the problem re-emerges into the light of Plotinus' daring identification of sense with essence.

It should, in view of the arguments developed in this book's preceding pages, come as no surprise to find that Plotinus rejects the definition of man given in the *Alcibiades*, chapter 4,10; 12 ff. It has already been observed above that he implicitly finds this definition no longer adequate.[53] But the reason here given for his rejection is novel. Such a definition, says Plotinus, is simply a λόγος ... δηλωτικὸς τοῦ ἐσομένου, it does not tell us anything about the essence of man (17 f.). It is simply descriptive of the composite of body and soul. What is sought is the λόγος πεποιηκώς, 25, the creative, psychic power constitutive of man.[54] Theiler has aptly commented on the uniquely ambivalent use of the term *logos* for definition and "Wesen" or "Wesenheit", or again (in chapter 5,9) for the creative powers of soul.[55] I suggest that Plotinus is here creatively criticizing the Platonic-Aristotelian notion of definition, in an attempt to reveal his own new concept of that notion and its relation to the psychic power typified in the discursively reasoning soul.

Man, then, is a *logos*[56] different from the soul which forms his being; more precisely, he is an act of the soul in its modified phase, chapter 5,3 ff. This modified phase of soul was its own prior to embodiment (*ibid.*, line 13); historical man is an *eidôlon* of man, a latter existence (16) – the distinction of VI 4, 14 is here maintained and modified. Man, indeed, can be said to be the *enulos logos* of a particularized soul.

It is worthwhile remarking *en passant* that apart from its function as definition the description of man as a *logos* here fulfils the essential requirements of that term, as they have been most convincingly deduced in the recent investigation of J.M. Rist.[57] *Logos*, says Rist, "means to Plotinus that aspect of Soul which by transmitting the creative Forms creates, maintains and orders the visible universe".[58] He adds

that "as Soul embraces all individual souls, so the *logos* embraces individual *logoi*."[59] Thus the *logos* of man, a link between the intelligible and the sensible, creative and ordering "visible", i.e. historical man, resembles this description. Its full function is explained in chapter 6. There (having reminded us in chapter 5,21 ff. of the more divine, undescended, "intelligible" phase of soul) Plotinus, forced by the logic of his argument to attribute to the higher that sensible realm already shown to be "in" the Intelligible, asks – how is this so?

The complex answer is formulated as follows: the soul in the transcendent perceives the *aisthêta* of that realm. A figurative phrase, we may think – but then Plotinus adds that the man of sense perceives the sensible *harmonia* of this world, and from this lowest phase (of perception) establishes the harmonic link to the *harmonia* of the Intelligible World. Thus, for example, his perception of fire "here below" is an *integral perception*, insofar as he relates it to the Fire Intellectual, which the soul in the transcendent perceives through its relation to It. Plotinus means more than a figurative explanation of intelligizing: this latter *is* perception, because it is of the one nature, though on a different level, with sense-perception: later on, he can say that "perceptions here are Intellections of the dimmer order, and the Intellections There are vivid perceptions."[60] This pre-established harmony, or unity, of two apparently conflicting orders or reality, and of the – nonetheless different – means of becoming aware of each, solves the problem formulated at chapter 3,30.

Before going on to consider the implications of this subsumption of the sensible into the Intelligible, it is worthwhile commenting on an aspect of the passage – namely, its felicitous use of *logos* as a designation for man, that is, man of the historical order. We have already noted how it corresponds, as definition and creative power, to the normal Plotinian concept of *logos*, as established by Rist.[61] Now Rist has also pointed out[62] that at III 3, 4 Plotinus distinguishes two types of *logos*, the one creative, the other

linking the things of process with higher things. This latter Rist understands "as the opposite force to the creative procession, namely the return of the emanated products to their source".[63] Above, we saw the perception of man of the sense realm described as integral insofar as it involved a linking reference to the perception of the real Fire in the Intelligible: in other words, insofar as the latter man returned to the essential completeness and vividness of his intelligible reality. And this is a function of man as *logos*. It would seem that the tendency remarked upon by Rist is illustrated strikingly in this process.

It now remains to discuss some of the notions developed in chapters 6 to 10 of the treatise. In chapter 6,9 ff. Plotinus speaks of the *degrees* of human existence – degrees related in precisely the same way as the "intelligible" and "sensible" perception he has been discussing. There are three degrees – that of man in the transcendent (in *nous*, 12), who illuminates the man of sense, who, in turn, illuminates the third man, that is, the *phytikos*. Some men, however, act by the lowest of these, others by the higher degrees – and each individual *is* that by which he acts, though he is *all* as well, for the soul is all, and acts in different subjects at different times. The passage is a recapitulation of III 4, 2,6 ff.,[64] combining, as there, the notion of a free determination of the self by itself with that of the soul's being all things, *ibid.*, 3,21 ff.[65] It was said there that we are each of us an "intelligible universe", but the phrase was unfounded, and continued so, because it could not be justified except by an appeal to Plotinus' teaching on the undescended part of the soul. Now, however, that all subsequents can be shown to inhere in the Intelligible, it is clearer why we, as living, discursively reasoning beings, can, in virtue of this power and of our sense-powers, be said to be *totally* (and not merely as *nous* or "intelligible soul") of that intelligible universe. The further relationship of the two passages is clear in Plotinus' next words: an apology for the strangeness of the notion that the *logos* of a man can come to occupy the body of an animal – this was the theme of III 4. As there, Plotinus

insists that this will only be the fate of a diseased, debased soul. For when the soul is pure and unfallen, it will "choose man and be man", 24. Human existence is willed, it is a decision, and, moreover, the decision of a morally sound soul. These texts should be added to such ones as II 9 (against the Gnostics), to emphasize the positive nature of embodiment for Plotinus, a factor which in itself justifies his searching inquiry into the nature of historical man.

How does this "willing" of human existence operate? Plotinus seems to believe that the All-Soul, as a universal *logos*, lays down a sketch or pattern (*prohypographên*, chapter 7,11) of the individual in advance, and that this is then elaborately articulated by the individual soul, which forms itself after that towards which it tends (13-15), just as the choral dancer adapts himself to the given action. Plotinus then checks the course of his thought, which has drawn him thus far from his original theme. He may well have regretted this momentary aberration, for it differs from the notion of embodiment which he has given in IV 3, 12,37; 13, 1 ff. There it was said of the soul that it descends to a recipient with which it has affinity of condition (*diathesis*), and to which it characteristically tends. Now the interesting thing is that this explanation would fit perfectly into the place taken by the above-mentioned one, for in the previous chapter we have seen that the tendency of the soul to be manifest in its dominant, appropriate act was asserted in general, and asserted of man in particular.[66] Why has Plotinus offered a variant, which gives All-Soul a share in the formation of man, and speaks of individual soul as adapting itself – from an apparently neutral prime state – to the characteristics *given it* by the model of All-Soul? Now precisely in this adaptation or working-out of detail lies the notion of the bringing to fulfilment of a potential.[67] The passage starts from the notion of an All-Soul which is all things (1. 4 f.): it, the All-Soul, must therefore be the active cause of individual things, which emerge from latency into actuality in its individual components. We may speak of a new description of the same phenomenon here: it should, furthermore, be

remarked that the passage in question affords perhaps a better account of the *original* embodiments of human individual souls, as opposed to *subsequent* embodiments of human souls dependant upon the lives which they have lived here, than the other passage, and than such accounts as were given in chapter 6 of the present treatise, and in III 4. Yet there is an inconsistency: the apparent subjection of the individual soul to the action (*drama*) imposed upon it by the All-Soul. It would seem that the metaphor of the dance, used indiscriminately here, has hindered rather than helped Plotinus, in that it suggests an *absence of freedom* on the individual's part. This was not intended: in any sense, the All, or totality, *is* the cause of the individual parts – this was established in chapters 2 and 3 of both the intelligible and sensible wholes, and stressed again in another dance-image.[68] There is, however, no connotation of individual lack of freedom in the notion of the sympathy and totality of all beings in the Total Being, a notion developed on the grand scale in IV 4, 30 ff.[69] – in our passage, on the contrary, there is such a connotation. And this is precisely why Plotinus may have dropped the matter so abruptly.

In summary, then: historical human existence is willed, by a good soul – it is a realization of essence on a lower level, "une pensée universelle qui se particularise", as Trouillard says.[70] Conversely, the characteristics of such an existence, the *sensibilia* which go to form its totality, are inherent in this essence; in fact, they are an aspect (*logos*) of its activity (*energeia*), and it, being complete, contains them. VI 7, 1-7 are the climax of that tendency to include historical man in the total definition of man, a tendency which began in IV 3, 27. And this definition is achieved by re-thinking the whole relationship of the sensible to the intelligible, of sense to essence.

Plotinus refers to the constituents of the human self in his treatise on "The Heavenly System" (II 1 [40], 5,18 ff.). The self, he says, is formed by the soul which is given by the divine beings in the heavens, and by the heavens themselves. By this soul he apparently means the soul in the universe, the

lower, creating soul (*physis*)[71] – it is, in fact, a "shadow of soul"[72] – and through it we are associated with the body. But it is not this principle which is the *basis* of the self: that is the higher soul's prerogative.[73] What follows is, however, significant. The higher soul is principle, not of our existence pure and simple, but of our excellence, 21. Why? Because, when the body is already constituted, it "comes", bringing with itself some small trace from the realm of its reason (*logismos*) to the being in question.

There is, thus, a clear distinction between the constitution of the body and the faculty of *logismos* of the higher soul. In IV 4,18 the former, as we have seen,[74] was said to be a part of the self. Plotinus seems to assert this with more confidence here: one might conclude from the distinction he draws in line 21 that the "lower" soul is cause "of our existence". What of the higher, and why is it the cause of "our excellence"? There would seem to be an approach here towards Plotinus' eventual identification of the "higher soul" with *logismos*. Now at V 1[10], 11,1 ff. it is asserted that it is the function of the soul to "reason (*logizomenês*) upon the right and good, for reasoning (*logismou*) is an enquiry into the rightness and goodness of this rather than that". This soul is "separate and not mingled into body, within the first Intellectual", *ibid.*, 10,16. It is the decision-making, selective faculty (V 3, 2,6 ff.), and this is, in turn, because of its situation *between* the intelligible and sense realms, for at this point historical man must decide his course of action.

The higher soul, therefore, constitutes the man, for it is an *ethical* faculty, freely deciding in what way the potential of the self may be realized. Now such a faculty was known to us from III 4, 2 and VI 7, 6, but it had not been identified beyond its being an activity of soul. In the present passage, it is identified with *logismos*, but tentatively. Later texts will assert explicitly that the decision-making faculty, which is self at its truest, is none other than the *psychê logizomenê* (V 3, 1 ff.; I 1). For the present, it is important to remember that what is often described as the "normal" definition of the self – as if it were merely a definition of it *qua* essence (*tou einai aitia*) – is more than that: it is a *normative* (*tou eu einai . . . aitia*) definition of the person's free power of determination, which has been slowly and carefully developed from within the movement of Plotinus' thought.

Let us now turn to one of the texts in which the self and the *psychê logizomenê* are unequivocally identified, and described in some detail. V 3 [49], 1 ff. deals with the self-knowledge of *nous*, but chapter 2,1 ff. preludes this with the query: has the soul self-knowledge, and what would the knowing principle in it be, and how would it operate? It is observed that the *aisthêtikon* of soul deals with objects *external* to itself, and that its *logizomenon* deals with the representations coming from perception (*aisthêsis*), and *judges* these. It may, likewise, observe the "impressions" (*typoi*) coming from *nous*, and it can exercise the same power in regard to these as it may in relation to sense *typoi*. What is here implied is the *mean* or *middle* position of the *logizomenon*, between sense and intelligence, a position later referred to explicitly when the self is described as "the mid-point between two powers, between the sensitive principle, inferior to us, and the intellectual principle superior", 3,38. This faculty, because of is *liaison* rôle, will not only judge; it will also be the repository of human understanding and of memory (2,11 ff.). The latter is explained as the understanding "adaptation" of new impressions to ones already held: it is described graphically in 3,1 ff. Now it was observed above that, on the one hand, the self is conceived of as a *mean* or *middle* existent, a "Mittel- und Mittlerinstanz"[75] – this was implicit in such texts as II 9, 2. What was there an *unidentified* aspect of soul is here (a) equated with the *logizomenon*, and (b) related, as we shall see, to the self or *hêmeis*. And, on the other hand, we have commented upon the fact that memory, which constitutes the historical personality, exercised a fascination for Plotinus at IV 3, 27 ff., and that he there included the *eidôlon*, its repository, in the self.[76] These aspects, the mid-point and memory, which Plotinus, it would seem, was determined to integrate into a complete account of the self – in spite of the

difficulties involved – are now subsumed into a coherent, unified argument: the progress in elucidation of thought is considerable.

Before answering, with Plotinus, the initial question as to whether this aspect of soul has self-knowledge, it is appropriate to comment on the judging faculty of the *logizomenon* – for the power of determination has clearly been isolated as typical of the self. In the present text, Plotinus attempts to find a basis for this power. We have already noted[77] that at V 1, 11,1 ff. it was suggested that the *psychê logizomenê* reasons upon the right and good: the explanation given there is that there is some permanent criterion of what is right in us – this is said to be *nous*, line 6. The same basis for the soul's power of discretion is advanced in our text. Plotinus says that if the understanding (*dianoia*) speaks from within itself when it recognizes Socrates on the strength of his goodness, it is because "it contains within itself a standard (*kanôn*) of good"; this in turn is the effect of the irradiation of *nous* upon it. Thus Plotinus explains the canon or criterion as the presence of the higher power of *nous* in the discursive soul – he has, in a sense, translated the ethical aspect of the Platonic Form into the language of his own thought, yet without sacrificing the finely nuanced notion of the self's power to determine, not only for better, but – in proportion, we might say, as this higher power is less effective in us – for worse, upon degrees of action and existence below the recognizable human – a faculty based, as has been seen,[78] no less on the Theory of Forms than on the unicity of soul which is potentially all things.

Having spoken of the "traces of *nous*" which the *logizomenon* receives, Plotinus asks: why is the latter not simply *nous*? This query had been implied already at chapter 2,14 ff. There the *logizomenon* is described, in its powers of memory and understanding, as the νοῦς ὁ τῆς ψυχῆς.[79] Plotinus asks if this latter has introversion and self-knowledge. If it has, he continues, we must (a) show in what way it differs from *nous*, and (b) show to what degree it has self-knowledge (for it must differ in its degree of self-

knowledge from *nous*).

Now in V 3, 2 Plotinus' first answer seems to be that introversion is reserved for *nous* (16), since the *logizomenon* or *dianoêtikon*, rather than being introvert, exercises its understanding on external impressions (23 ff.). Now it would appear to be precisely this external orientation which characterizes the *psychic* nature of the faculty, "because all the activities mentioned are within the scope of a reasoning faculty, and reasoning is characteristically the function of the Soul", chapter 3,16 ff. This faculty has not the exclusive self-concentration of *nous*: "we hold that observation of self and of the content of self must belong to Intellectual Principle." It can therefore be attributed only to Soul, but as an intellectual function of this latter. There is, says Plotinus, no objection to saying that *nous* unalloyed (*katharos*) is in the soul, but that does not mean that it is a phase of it. In fact, it is not of the soul, but it is *ours*.

What do these words imply? In the first place, they stress that what is "ours" reaches beyond the limits of soul. The notion "ours", closely related to that of self, is introduced to reinforce, as it were, the difference between *nous* and the *logizomenon*: by excluding the latter from *nous*, Plotinus is saying, we are not excluding *nous* from the self's scope. A notion of the self is introduced here that may *include nous*, but *is not nous*: "we" are *kat'ekeinon*, not it, 31. Strictly speaking, the self is that which reasons and thinks the thoughts in the understanding:[80] it is a mean, as has already been observed, between two powers, and, insofar as it is a *logizomenon*, it is "the soul at its highest", *kyrion tês psychês*. The latter phrase is a by now familiar description of the self,[81] but while it elsewhere means no more than the higher aspects of the soul, it is here identified with discursive reason. Thus many strands of argument unite here in explicit form: self as mid-point, self as memory, self as determination, self as master-principle, all seen now as psychic functions on the level of *logismos* or *dianoia*.

Thus Plotinus shows us the difference between *nous* and *logismos*. He can now turn to the second problem, the

question asked at chapter 2,1 f., concerning the degree of the latter's self-knowledge. There is a first attempt to distinguish this from the self-knowledge of *nous* at chapter 4,3 ff. Plotinus offers three types of self-knowledge, of which we take the first ("understanding all other things in virtue of this [i.e. *nous*] being present, visible to us in all its wonder") to refer to the self-knowledge of the *logizomenon*, for it is precisely in the light of *nous* as chapter 3,10 ff. says, that we know all other things, the externals.[82] In lines 8 ff. he explains himself. This type of self-knowledge, he says, is awareness of the nature of the soul's reflective power. It would be unlikely that the understanding were unaware that it has understanding, or that it judges, or that the criteria of its judgement derive from *nous*, or that the latter is a principle higher than itself, *ibid*., 14 ff.

This awareness of its derivation from *nous*, of its being a secondary *eikôn nou*, a repository of the Forms, is the very mode of the self's self-knowledge. In a sense, Plotinus has elaborated the description of the self only to show that it is, and can be, surpassed by its Prior: the soul, he says, knows itself only as belonging to something else, chapter 6,3. It may be understood as the image in our historical process whereby the archetypal self-knowledge of *nous* can be grasped, *ibid*., 16 ff. The image is *didactic*, effective in that part of the soul which is "in some respects intellective", a "type of *nous*", or which "holds its particular power through and from *nous*". As a reason-principle (*logos*, 26), this has self-knowledge by its kinship with *nous*: it knows what it sees and is aware of this knowledge (23 f.) – were it what it affirms, it would possess self-knowledge, but as its affirmation derives from above, it is rather a *pointer* to absolute self-knowledge, to which the self attains by transposing this *eikôn* to the realm of real *nous*, 28 ff. Thus the self-knowledge of the *dianoêtikon* is not merely the simple understanding of the latter's nature, functions and place, which this naturally has: it is, more importantly, insofar as its inherent deficiencies suggest the completeness of real self-knowledge, the historically effective propaedeutic to the latter.

A subsequent passage returns to the notion of the self as a formative, elevating faculty, enabling man in the historical process to transcend that process. Referring to the Platonic account[83] of the influence of the stars in shaping our personality, Plotinus asks what remains as our real self (*hêmeis*), if we are so bound by necessity, II 3 [52], 9,14 ff. The self, he answers, is what "we" in truth are, since nature has given us the power of controlling our sensibilities. "We in truth" can clearly be equated with "soul at its highest", *kyrion tês psychês*, of V 3, 3,37 and other passages:[84] that it can be called the ruling faculty is clear on the basis of such passages as II 1, 5,20 ff. and V 3, 2,7 ff., where its decision-making faculty, superior to the sensitive soul and acting in accord with *nous*, is delineated. This faculty or power of self expresses, says Plotinus, "virtue the unconquerable", *adespotos aretê*, which God has given us:[85] it enables us to free ourselves from this sphere, from all the accretions that go to make up the "composite", that "body ensouled"[86] in which the bodily element dominates, only a trace of the soul being effectively present. The self, that other soul,[87] achieves the impulse to elevate and to transcend the "everyday" self, 25.

This account closely resembles that of II 1, 5,18 ff.[88] The idea that in the faculty which "we" are resides the virtue (*aretê*) necessary to our improvement was there expressed in the form that our self was cause, not of our existence, but of our excellence. Similarly, the rejection of the "body ensouled" here is paralleled by that of the "shadow of soul" there. There would appear to be a refusal to include the "everyday" self in the self as a whole which we found at IV 3, 27 ff., VI 6, 15 and VI 7, 1 ff., in these two passages. Have we to do with a rejection by Plotinus of a line of thought elaborated by him? It should be remarked in the first place that in each case we are dealing with *argumenta ad hominem*. Plotinus is defending the concept of an independent self against astrological influences in the soul's formation, which would imply a predetermination of our historical life: he must seem to attack the inclusion of the

eidôlon in the self, still more the modified body. But that it is no more than a matter of seeming can be seen in his subsequent words at II 3, 9,27 ff. Bereft of the higher world, says Plotinus, man lives fate-bound, sunk in the system, a part of it. For "every human Being is twofold (*dittos*); there is the composite (*synamphoteron*), and there is the real self (*autos*)", and, as body, we are subject to the All (36). In other words, as if aware of the possible impression of inconsistency he might be giving, Plotinus says: there are two aspects from which one may observe the human person, and the "self" of the historical process is, as we have shown, one of them. But the *real* self, because free, and a master-principle, an ethical no less than an ontological category, as III 4 and VI 7, 6 have stressed, is the more significant object of our investigation. Of it, we can say that it is *par excellence* the self (*autos*). Plotinus later speaks of those men who are born part of the All and of the realm of exteriority, and he says that they are "hardly, or not at all, themselves (*autoi*)". But those who master all this and transcend it, by an impulse "towards the Higher, to what is outside even the soul", save what is noble and primevally good in their psychic nature, chapter 15, 13 ff.

Plotinus will find no more satisfying formula to include both aspects of historical man in the self than that of "every human Being is twofold (*dittos*)". However, the measure of his advance on traditional Platonic identifications of self and soul, without further elaboration, is apparent precisely in his concern not to delimit the boundaries of self. His last word on the matter is at I 1 [53], 10,5 ff., "This We, then, covers two distinct notions (*ditton*); sometimes it includes the brute-part, sometimes it transcends this." Here there is clear assent to the fulness of self and to the different concepts one is forced to form of it. But a more detailed examination of I 1 is called for.

At the beginning of this book the importance of the treatise I 1 as a systematically conceived propaedeutic to the thought of Plotinus was stressed. We suggested that it evoked themes which have, in the previous pages, been shown to

have occupied Plotinus throughout his writings. If philosophy begins with self-knowledge, then the question "what is the self? " will be primal. We must now consider I 1 from another viewpoint: as a climax to Plotinus' answer to this question. It is the last occasion on which he deals with it, in a treatise written at the end of his life. He may already have been ill of the disease from which he died: in any case, Porphyry tells us that he received the treatise in a batch delivered shortly before his master's death.[89] Thus the ailing philosopher grapples once again with the precise description of the self, even of the earthly historical self.

That chapters 2-7 of the treatise are devoted to determining the faculty of man's sensitive phase should come as no surprise to one familiar with the place accorded to the *eidôlon*[90] or "modified body"[91] in Plotinus' thought. The man at this level, compounded, as chapter 7,1 ff. explains, of the modified body and a light[92] from soul proper, "forms a distinct principle, the Animate (*zôon*)", in which sense-perception is active. But what of the self, "How have We sense-perception? " Plotinus' answer is familiar: "we" are not separate from the Animate, although, man's essence, being a manifold, contains many higher faculties. Man is many (chapter 9,7), he says, recalling the soul's multivalence, which is the basis for differences in human types.[93] But it is the faculty which discerns the impressions from sense-perception – these impressions are intelligibles[94] – in other words, the *logizomenon* – or, as Plotinus says here, that in which "reason and opinion" reside – that, as V 3 had established, is the true self, chapter 7, 16 f. In words reminiscent of the description of V 3, Plotinus says of this faculty that "in many of its manifestations it is the assimilation and reconciliation of the outer to the inner," 9,22.

Plotinus has to deal with the objection inherent in this account of the self as a type of soul, albeit reasoning soul (10,1 ff.): namely, that if the soul is the self, and the self is subject to the experiences of the composite, then the soul would appear to be subject to the passions, whereas it is a cardinal thesis of Plotinus' thought that the soul is *impassive*,

ibid.[95] Plotinus' answer is careful: the self, he argues, is not exclusively soul, the couplement (*koinon*) is also "a member of this total We (*hêmôn*)"; self can be described *either* as the man-animal *or* as the soul above this modified body. This answer has already been commented upon.[96] Ultimately, it suggests a failure to provide a single, all-embracing formula for the self. As Trouillard says of man, "il ne peut se fixer," there is a "contradiction qui est au coeur de l'homme", he is "polyvalence et oscillation perpétuelle".[97] But if there is a problem here, there is nonetheless a *comprehensive description*, including what may even be considered as *accidentalia*, of each level of the self. Plotinus has remained faithful to the Aristotelian notion of definition, of which he approves, saying that a good definition should include most of the defined object's accidentals.[98]

Another section of the treatise raises a problem already observed in Plotinus. The higher principles, those formative of *nous* and the higher soul, act upon us, he says, when they attain to the *mid-point* of soul, 11,3 f. Thus the receptive self is the soul's mean term – we might add, between its intellectual and generative faculties.[99] Yet, Plotinus queries, is not the self also that phase above the mid-point? Yes, he replies, but only when we "lay hold of it (*antilêpson*)", and are aware of it actively, 11,5. In other words, the self becomes that which it potentially is: when the mid-point is directed towards a phase higher or lower than itself a new aspect of man's nature is thereby realized. This assertion repeats, on the one hand, the observations of III 4, 2,6 ff. and VI 7, 6,17 ff. on the self-determination of man as an activity (*energeia*). But there is a further element to the account here, and it is related to the notion of awareness connoted by the word *antilêpsis*. The passage bears a striking resemblance to V 1, 12,5 ff., where the notion of consciousness, as distinct from soul, is introduced. There it is asserted that an experience only enters the self when it enters our sense-perception, and so the "entire soul". We are not a part of the soul, but "the total", and "knowledge. . . . depends upon transmission and perception (*antilêpsis*)."[100]

From such passages it would be tempting to conclude too much, to see, for example, a determination of the self as being dependent on the level of consciousness operative at the time. It was this tendency in P.O. Kristeller's[101] book that K.-H. Volkmann-Schluck, in particular, warns against.[102] The theme is taken up by W. Himmerich.[103] Their objections are to be taken seriously, but the above-quoted passages undoubtedly do stress the significant relation of "empirisches Bewusstsein" to the empirical self. We might formulate the relation as follows: (and hereby we do justice at once to Kristeller's thesis, and to the objections of his critics) there is *no* conditioning of self by the act of consciousness, for self, the vehicle of consciousness, would necessarily exist before that act; there is, however, the assertion that only insofar as a faculty is consciously operative, can it be said to be of the self. The self is not a static *datum*, even if it exists potentially in its entirety (11,7): it is essentially a faculty of conscious self-determination, a mid-point which can be directed towards the higher or the lower, 11,6.[104]

There is one final passage of the treatise to be commented upon here. At chapter 13,1 ff. Plotinus attempts to answer a question posed at chapter 1,9 f.: what is the principle which investigates the whole matter in dispute, in other words, what is the philosophical organ proper? Plotinus' answer is that it is the self, but "by the soul". He then explains this "by the soul": it does not mean "by possessing soul", but rather "by the fact of being Soul". That is to say, if the investigating faculty, discursive reason (*dianoia* or *logismos*), is soul, and so operative, it is the "intellective soul (*psychê noera*)",6. Now our intellection is twofold–there is the intellection of *nous* upon us, and there is the intellection of soul. And it is precisely the latter which is observable in the investigation of the nature of the self. But the self *is* that soul, as V 3 and other texts–including the present one–have stressed. Therefore, it is through a form of self-knowledge that the nature of the self has to be investigated. What exactly this self-knowledge consists in, has been described in V 3, 1-6.

Appendix to Chapter 2

νοῦς ὁ τῆς ψυχῆς, V 3, 2,14 (see above, p. 42).

The ambiguity of language inherent in this phrase is closely related to the conceptual difficulty of distinguishing, in Plotinus, between the higher, intellectual part of soul – for him, "undescended" from *nous* – and the hypostasis *nous* proper. Thus, at V 1, 10,12, Plotinus speaks of both faculties as *nous*: the one, νοῦς ... ὁ μὲν λογιζόμενος, clearly being the secondary *nous* of Soul, the other, ὁ δὲ λογίζεσθαι παρέχων (*sc.* τῇ ψυχῇ), being the higher, which is not itself λογιζόμενος. (cf. VI 9, 5,5 ff.). Now such difficulties as might arise from too exclusive a division between *nous* and *psychê* would seem to be already obviated by the subsumption of the sensible, and *a fortiori* the psychical, into the intelligible, in VI 7, 1-10. There we learn not to distinguish in absolute terms between what are essentially levels of a unified hierarchy. But that teaching does not solve the present problem. *Nous* and *psychê are* two distinct levels of reality: but in the above passages they appear to be identical in being and purpose. And that is going further than speaking of the subsumption of the lower into the higher.

There is a text where Plotinus seems to express himself more felicitously, thus perhaps overcoming the linguistic confusion of the double *nous*. The text in question is I 1, 8,1 ff., where Plotinus distinguishes between αὐτὸν τὸν νοῦν, 2, and the νοῦν ... ἣν ἡ ψυχὴ ἔχει ἕξιν οὖσαν τῶν παρὰ τοῦ νοῦ. The usage of the term ἕξις to describe this faculty appears to be unique in Plotinus: it occurs here in his penultimate treatise, and may be seen as an effort to establish the true value of the *nous* active in the higher *psychê*. Now it is interesting that Proclus takes up this term: *In Tim.* II. 140. 21 distinguishes between the νοῦς οὐσιώδης (=ἄυλος, θεῖος,

20) and the νοῦς which is ὡς ἕξιν τῆς ψυχῆς *Ibid.* II. 313. 1 clarifies: τριχῶς γὰρ ὁ νοῦς· πρῶτος μὲν ὁ θεῖος, οἷος δὴ καὶ ὁ δημιουργικός, δεύτερος δὲ ὁ μετεχόμενος ὑπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς, οὐσιώδης καὶ αὐτοτελής, τρίτος δὲ ὁ καθ' ἕξιν, δι' ὃν ἡ ψυχὴ νοερά ἐστιν. This text is explicit: of these aspects of the *nous*, we might say that the second is that in which the self participates insofar as it intelligizes (it is the purpose of the third chapter of this book to investigate the implications of this) – Plotinus would call it the "undescended" part of soul (this theory was unacceptable to Proclus, cf. e.g. *In Tim.* III. 333. 28). The third aspect of *nous* would be that constitutive of soul's noetic (intelligible) nature, that is, what the soul owes to having *nous* as its Prior. It is, in a sense, a manifestation of *nous*, but it is primarily a *psychic* manifestation.

3. The Self and Nous (Theos)

In that early treatise on the soul's immortality, IV 7, in which, as we have seen,[1] Plotinus speaks for the first time of the nature of the self, there is a passage, chapter 10, dealing with what he calls the soul's "diviner nature".[2] It has already been shown[3] that the soul is "real Being": its immaterial nature, without tangible attributes, is also an indication of this "diviner" aspect. There are, however, continues Plotinus, other proofs that it, like every divine and real Being (5), "possesses a life benificent and wise". He takes the example of a soul that has not been mastered by the emotions, the soul, we would say, of a "detached" person, and asks us to accept that it "demonstrates that all evil is accretion, alien, and that in the purged soul the noble things are immanent, wisdom and all else that is good, as its native store". Now this soul possesses wisdom and virtue, things "divine", and what possesses these must be itself divine, in that it has *a capacity for the divine by reason of its kinship and identical substance (homoousion) with the divine.*[4] Plotinus, indeed, is prepared to take this identity of substance so far that he claims that the only difference between man in a purified state, and the higher (20), is that the former is associated with a body. In this he is consistent with the tendency of chapter 1 of the treatise to see in body the *matter* or *instrument* that is in no way constitutive of the self.[5]

Continuing (27), Plotinus remarks that to assure ourselves of the truth of what he has been saying, we must look at ourselves in our purified, unalloyed state: by this means, we see ourselves become a nous (32 ff.), ἀιδίῳ τὸ ἀίδιον κατανοοῦντα, πάντα τὰ ἐν τῷ νοητῷ, κόσμον καὶ αὐτὸν νοητὸν καὶ φωτεινὸν γεγενημένον, ἀληθείᾳ καταλαμπόμενον τῇ παρὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ὃ πᾶσιν ἐπιλάμπει τοῖς νοητοῖς ἀλήθειαν.[6] In such cases one can speak of a *divinization* of

the soul: Plotinus (38 f.) reads into a phrase of Empedocles the soul's becoming "an immortal God", one with the Supreme, 39 ff. It is not (43) by any activity directed towards the external that the soul "sees" the virtues, but rather "it learns them of its own nature, in its contact with itself, in its intellectual grasp of itself, seeing deeply impressed upon it the images of its primal state," 44 ff. Plotinus concludes this passage with an image of living gold: the dross in it would keep it in ignorance of itself, only unalloyed can it know and admire itself in its perfection.

The text gives the impression of being comprehensive, and for that reason it can serve not only as a beginning to our present inquiry – whose main themes it summarizes – but also as a yardstick for measuring Plotinus' eventual development of the notions here mentioned. Let us observe the cardinal points made: (1) the soul's identity of substance (*homoousion*) with *nous* – for if it is identical with the divine, in its purity, and it sees itself (32 ff.) in this purity, as a *nous*, then it must be one with *nous*, indeed, it is itself *nous*; (2) the implied "explanation" of the soul's withdrawal from the historical process by means of stressing its essential affinity with the divine, as *nous*; (3) the suggestion that self-knowledge, obtainable only in the unalloyed state of "detachment", will be essentially that of the identical knower and known – and so only possible at the level of nous, of man's primal, former state, 48; (4) finally, the notion that this process is equivalent to a divinization of man. From these points emerge the following considerations: Plotinus speaks of an *original self*, detached, intelligible in character; with what consistency does he describe this? How is this self related to the concept of the "we" developed in the last chapter of this book? Is it, for example, accurate to speak of it as "man", in view of the apparent divinization involved? Finally, does unity with the divine as *nous* preclude the *individuality of the self* at this level, or can we speak of individual existence in *nous*? These considerations will now be dealt with: the survey of relevant texts will once again be chronological. The problem of reflexion, of the exact nature

of self-knowledge at *nous* level, will be treated in a separate section of this chapter.[7]

We should, at the outset, remind ourselves of an axiom of Plotinian thought that has direct bearing upon the present discussion. At V 2 [11], 2,1 ff., the principle of hierarchy (*taxis*), in which each level retains its characteristic "position" in spite of the progression from it, is mentioned, and Plotinus adds an important qualification to it: "on the other hand, every being is in identity with its prior as long as it holds that contact." In other words, the effect resides in and is not separated from the cause. Thus the soul of dead vegetal matter "goes" whence it "came"; or, accurately speaking, it is always in its principle, *ibid.*, lines 13 ff. Similarly, the higher phases of soul are "in" each other, and so on, until the level of *nous* is reached, 19. This presence of soul in *nous* can be described as *virtual*: when it is actualized, the soul can be said to act as *nous*. There is here ground for the statement of IV 7, 10,19 that soul is of identical substance with *nous*. Before passing on to the texts which deal more specifically with our problems, further reminder should be given of the description of soul as an intelligible universe at III 4 [15], 3,22; 6,22. By what is highest in us, says Plotinus, we are linked to the intelligible, and we are permanently in that higher sphere. In other words – and here the "intelligible universe" of IV 7, 10,35 is re-echoed – there is substantial evidence that from the beginning of his literary activity Plotinus had a clear conception of the original self resident in *nous*.[8]

At I 2 [19], 6,1 ff. Plotinus says that our concern is to be not merely without fault, but to be God. If there is any unfree (in the context, "sinful") activity, the human subject is twofold, God and *daimôn*, or rather, God with another, conjoined nature. If, on the other hand, there is no such involuntary accretion, he is "God unmingled", but "a God of those that follow upon The First". Man's self (*autos*, 7) is that which "came from the transcendent", and "the essential man (*to kath' hauton* 'das seinem Selbst Entsprechende', Harder) is There, once the primal excellence is restored."

That is to say, man's essential self is in the transcendental, the intelligible.

In its very wording the text is relevant to our queries. The *motif* of divinization is predominant: the real self is in the Supreme, what we witness here is the association of this self with a lower phase. How seriously are the words "to be God" to be taken? One factor of importance is the context of the treatise as a whole, for it starts as a commentary on the Platonic text[9] of ὁμοίωσις θεῷ. Now it was observed of the "immortal God" of IV 7, 10,39 that it was an *applied* phrase of Empedocles: we must reckon with the possibility that here, too, Plotinus is interpreting, or freely using a canonical text. Furthermore, as Harder has shown,[10] the limited sense in which Plato speaks of ὁμοίωσις (κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν) is irrevelant for Plotinus. Nor was the axiom a stranger to pre-Plotinian ethics: as Harder says elsewhere, "Für die Ethik des Platonismus seit Eudoxos, Theon von Smyrna, Gaios und Albinos war diese Maxime das Feldgeschrei."[11] So that we can say that, in general, Plotinus' statement is neither new, nor, at first sight, startlingly formulated. He is, however, curiously precise in his description of man's divine essence. Man, detached or transcendent, is "God", but man involved in conflict here and now is twofold, god and *daimôn*. What is the significance of *daimôn* here? If we bear in mind the traditional Greek philosophical concept of *daimôn* as a half-divine, half-human being,[12] Plotinus may seem to be suggesting that in the historical self, side by side with the transcendent, true part, is to be found a compound, not totally alienated from the divine, nor yet entirely mortal: such an existent would seem to tally with our description of the self in the previous chapter.[13] But the usage of *daimôn* is nonetheless strange: compare III 4, 6,1 ff., where man, when good, is called a *daimôn*, or – Plotinus adds correctively – his *daimôn* is *theos*, that is, the One. In the present passage, however, man as *daimôn* implies imperfection, man's double, impure nature. The *locus classicus* for the relation of *daimôn* and man is VI 7, 6,26 ff. — ποιεῖ (*sc.* ἡ ψυχή) δὲ καὶ δαίμονα πρότερον οὖσα ὁμοειδὴς τῇ ⟨ἣ⟩ ἄνθρωπον· καὶ ὁ πρὸ

αὐτῆς δαιμονιώτερος, μᾶλλον δὲ θεός, καὶ ἔστι μίμημα θεοῦ δαίμων εἰς θεὸν ἀνηρτημένος, ὥσπερ ἄνθρωπος εἰς δαίμονα. οὐ γὰρ λέγεται θεός, εἰς ὃν ὁ ἄνθρωπος. ὁμοειδής: the similarity of nature in the soul which creates the *daimôn* and man would seem to justify our text's close relationship of man to *daimôn*: but there is in this passage a clear differentiation between the levels of god, *daimôn* and man, all real existents in their own right. The ambiguity of I 2, 6 may arise from the ever-present tension in Plotinus' thought between its objectively identifiable categories, on the one hand, and its overriding ethical motivation, *apparently* destructive of such categories, as typified in such texts as I 2, 6, on the other. In the latter case, one cannot speak of a confusion of language: a real experience is validly expressed. In the present text, the "deification" of man, seen in his historical phase as still partly "daimonic", need not mean that Plotinus is *deliberately* insisting upon the dehumanization, strictly speaking, of the self in the transcendent.

Among the imprecision of language there is, however, one apparently very precise term, the *to kath' hauton* of line 8, which, if we accept Harder's rendering, means "that which corresponds to the self" at the intelligible level. Now *autos* (7) seems to be used by Plotinus, consciously, in reference to the self, the identifiable, historical "Socrates". But when he turns to speak of the "higher" man he qualifies his first term *autos* by the *to kath' hauton* – by that principle of identity in the transcendent which corresponds to the man we know as "Socrates" here on earth. This qualification, incidentally, would seem to corroborate our above conclusion that the *human* self is nonetheless maintained at the transcendental level, despite Plotinus' figurative talk of divinization.

Similar arguments might be applied in the case of another passage dealing with man in the transcendent, VI 4 [22], 14,16 ff. Here the words "Before we had our becoming here we existed There, men other than now, some of us gods" are problematical. Who are the "gods" who become embodied?

Let us first of all delimit the possibilities: taking the text of I 2, 6,6, we can say that the "gods" in question "follow upon The First". But what "gods" are brought to birth? Precisely the men who, as intelligences, can be described in their truest self as "gods". It is probably advisable to recall the Plotinian belief in reincarnation here, to remember that some souls will have excelled themselves in a previous life, and will have attained to that degree of inward-tending perfection that enables them to be described as *theoi*. It is perhaps these which Plotinus here foresees as men of prime example in a future period of embodiment. That the treatise III 4 says nothing of them need not surprise us – the treatise is patchy, incomplete and obscure in style. However, we can assume that the "gods" here referred to are akin to the "good man" of that treatise, chapter 6,1 ff.

The notions of "becoming man" and of dehumanization are used in a special sense in a further passage, V 8 [31], 7,31 ff. The question of the relation of the individual to the intelligible All or Whole occurs here – it will be dealt with later on in this chapter. For our present purposes it should be noted that the act of *becoming man* is an "apostasy" from the intelligible All, and that *vice versa* "ceasing to be man . . . he soars aloft. . ." Whatever the implications about individuality in these words, "man" here can surely not mean any more than the man of process, the historical conjoint. It is this man, the "other man" of VI 4,14, who is to be shed in the return to entirety with the whole. Again it would be an unduly literal interpretation which would see here a loss of selfhood, meaning human identity, in the return to transcendence.

There is a close resemblance between the words just quoted and V 3 [49], 4,10 f., where Plotinus says that man knows himself "by *nous*, with which he becomes identical". He does so, "as no longer man, but as a being that has become something other through and through". There can be little doubt that "man" here is equivalent to the "we" of chapter 3,31 ff. If the passage seems to distinguish even more explicitly than the foregoing one between intelligible

existence and "human" existence, it does so only to bring out the *identity of the self* at both levels: "the self (*autos*) becomes *nous*," *ibid.*, line 29. In other words, while we maintain, on the one hand, that Plotinus does not wish us to believe that "becoming *nous*" is a process of *depersonalization* of the human person, it is well to note, on the other hand, that his persistent identification of the transcendent self with God and the historical self with man allows him to isolate the notion common to both levels, namely, the notion of *self (autos)* or *identity*. This would appear to persist, in spite of the linguistic ambiguities concerning its divine or human characteristics. In fact, in chapter 8 of the same treatise, there is evidence that Plotinus could remain restrained in his concept of intelligible man. He says there that soul, an *eidôlon* (9), receives the vision which is light from its superior *nous*; it becomes "intellective" (23), and it derives an "intellective life" (34) from it. When it intelligizes it becomes "god*like* and *nous-like*" (47), its vision of *nous* is achieved by means of "that within itself which is most closely resemblant" to *nous* (53 ff.). One should note here the explicit maintenance of the *psychic* identity of the self, which *is like*, but does not become *nous*: we are reminded of the Plotinian teaching, itself prone to ambiguous phrasing,[14] on the *psychê noera*. "We" (44) know *nous* only by means of it (*di'autou*): this is the rationalized, objective account of what is elsewhere more flamboyantly evoked. One should not forget such passages in responding to Plotinus' use of language on other occasions.

In summary, let it be said that no overwhelming evidence for a "dehumanization" process emerges from the passages reviewed – if anything, a reassertion of the value of the self as a principle of identity at several levels is to be observed. But in our development of this sub-theme we have neglected texts dealing more generally with man at *nous*-level, and to these we must now return.

In the previous chapter it was pointed out that the subsumption of the sensible into the intelligible was one of the remarkable features of VI 7 [38], 1-10.[15] Nonetheless,

these chapters stress on more than one occasion the important distinction of levels of human existence. At chapter 6,9 ff., the "man in the transcendent", equivalent to "Man in *nous*, containing the Man that existed before any man", 11, is said to illuminate the second (= *aisthêtikos*), who in turn "illuminates" the third type, the *phytikos*. It is to be understood that all these types can, and, indeed, *must* co-exist in the one man. But there is no doubt that the first man in the Intelligible is the pre-eminent: "The higher Man, above this sphere, rises from the more godlike soul, a soul possessed of a nobler humanity and brighter perceptions," chapter 5,21 ff. Its relation to the body is indirect, through the intermediary, lower soul, "which uses the body directly", whereas it, "poised above . . . touches body only through that intermediary". It is of a different order than historical man, chapter 9,7. Elsewhere, Plotinus says the same, III 2 [47], 7,6: if one were to inquire after the "finest type of human being known here", he asserts, one would certainly not demand that he prove of the same calibre as the "man in *nous*".[16]

These phrases confirm the present writer's impression that Plotinus consistently maintained his belief in the "intelligible self" as the archetypal individual, and the goal of the individual's ethical striving. There is no real change in his view apparent in the treatises. In view of the notion discussed earlier – whether becoming *nous* implied a *real* divinization of man – it may be well to stress the obvious here, and say that in VI 7, and at III 2, 7, Plotinus leaves no doubt over the naming of the intelligible self as man, *anthrôpos*.

It should be recalled that the first seven chapters of VI 7 [38], particularly chapters 4 and 5, were found significant in the previous chapter of this book in that they related the sensible and the intelligible in a unique manner, precluding all dualism, and seeing in historical man the realization of an intelligible essence on a lower level. The intermediary of the realization was called *logos*, the creative, constitutive power (*energeia*) of soul.[17] This should now be applied to our growing understanding of the *transcendent* nature of man. Its

relevance to our present considerations may best be illustrated by a passage akin to VI 7, 4-5, but more explicit in its insistence on the element of transcendence in the *logos*-motif. At VI 3 [44], 15,28 ff., Plotinus turns, in the midst of speculation on the concepts of "similarity and dissimilarity" and their relation to "quality", to make the observation that man's essence (*to ti einai*) is in his *logos*. This essence, he continues, is not to be confused with the "sensible substance", a combination of Quality, Matter and Quantity, but really a *quale*, a *poion*, *ibid.*, lines 25 f. That which is perfected in man's bodily nature is a mere image (*eidolôn*) of the *logos*; in fact, a *quale*, a *poion ti*. So historical man, we may infer, is not an essence – and Plotinus corroborates our inference in his next words. Consider, he says, that the real man is the visible, "everyday" Socrates: yet we call his portrait by the name of "Socrates". Similarly, it is the *logos* which constitutes Socrates, whereas we call the Socrates we see by this name, although it is in fact a likeness (*mimêma*) of the *logos*, a "reproduction" of the latter.

It might be presumptuous to identify, without further ado, *logos* and intelligible man – especially as Plotinus himself, in the passage we are considering, goes on to say that this *logos* is, in turn, related in a similar manner to the truest *logos* of Man – but without explaining exactly what he means. He may be referring to the Form of Man.[18] Be that as it may, for our present purpose it is sufficiently clear that in the notion of *logos*, itself already the transcendent vehicle of the intelligible, Plotinus crystallizes that view of man's real, original self – and does so perhaps more felicitously than in those passages which speak of a divine or "divinized" self.

Let us now turn to the last of the questions posed above,[19] that concerning the problem of the self's identity as an individual when it is described as being one with the Intelligible Whole. If, according to IV 7, 10,19, the soul is of identical substance (*homoousion*) with *nous*, how can the differentiation necessary to assure individual human existence be guaranteed to the self which has actualized this

identity of substance? VI 4, 14,1 ff., starting from the concept of an Intelligible Whole whose content is one and infinite,[2] raises this very question. In preparing the answer, Plotinus stresses that men, before birth, are "pure souls, *nous* inbound with the entire of reality, members of the Intellectual, not fenced off, not cut away, integral to that All", 19 ff. Note that he speaks of men being at once souls *and nous*: an indication that we have to do here not exclusively with man as *nous*, but rather with the man whose soul is *one with the Intelligible*. Thus one cannot conclude that when Plotinus says that *each one of us* was transcendental man, 25, he wishes to say that we exist as individual intelligences: for as souls we are already in the transcendent, and we can be so as individual souls. Plotinus probably does not want to say more than this.

In a significant passage of the same treatise, VI 5, 7,1 ff., Plotinus describes the return of the historical self (*hêmeis*, 1) to the Intelligible Whole. He says that "we" and "ours" are reducable to Being (*to on*): "we are those Beings," 4. Direct knowledge implies identification with the object of knowledge, "to know without image is to be." This identification is part of a community of Being, therefore "we all are they", i.e. *together*, while being one with all – so that we can say that "we and all things are one," 8. In the vision of the self thus unified with being, God, the self and the All coincide, 12.[21] It is, says Plotinus, in becoming aware of the infinity of self, its unlimited nature, and in ceasing to separate it from Universal Being, that one "advances" to the latter, i.e. realizes one's presence in it, οὐκ ἔχων ὅπῃ αὑτὸν στήσας ὁριεῖται, μέχρι τίνος αὐτός ἐστιν, ἀφεὶς περιγράφειν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄντος ἅπαντος αὑτόν, εἰς ἅπαν τὸ πᾶν ἥξει κτλ. We should compare this remarkable statement with the notions of chapter 12,17 ff., where Plotinus says that, in the case of unity with Being, one ceases to think of the self as having any particular extension, or being determined, οὐδ' εἶπας οὐδὲ σύ 'τοσοῦτός εἰμι'. One becomes "an All", ἀφεὶς δὲ ⟨τὸ⟩ τοσοῦτον γέγονας πᾶς. ("ein Ganzes", Harder) -- as one previously was. All that goes to make one an individual, 22, is

to be put aside: but precisely in this detachment from all accretive non-Being *is the self increased*. αὔξεις τοίνυν σεαυτὸν ἀφεὶς τὰ ἄλλα καὶ πάρεστί σοι τὸ πᾶν ἀφέντι, 24.[22]

There is a tension in these passages which highlights the problem under discussion. On the one hand, a direct identification of oneself and all Being, "we and all things are one": one ceases to respect the boundary line between the self and Being, to consider the self as determined. On the other hand, the notion, especially clear in chapter 12,24 ff., that this identification, precisely because it is indicative of our subsumption into Being and casting-aside of the unreal *accidentalia*, can be described as an augmentation of the self. The first notion has been a favourite argument of those who would see here an influence of oriental thought, in particular of the *Upanishads*, upon Plotinus.[23] The present writer is unqualified to discuss this question:[24] but be that as it may, it will be argued that an oriental "annihilation of the self" (if that, in fact, is what the *Upanishads* teach) is not what Plotinus means,[25] and that his arguments suffice to explain *philosophically* how he reconciles the two apparently conflicting tendencies. The whole question can be put in a nutshell: what is the meaning of the word *pas* in the phrase *gegonas pas* of VI 5, 12,19? Does it – as the "orientalizing" commentators insist – mean that the self becomes All, in the sense of no longer being different from It? Or can it mean a fulfilment, a growth to entirety, as chapter 12,24 ff. seems to indicate? The following pages will show that we agree with M. de Gandillac[26] when he translates chapter 12,17 ff. as follows: "Tu ne dis plus, je suis de telle ou telle manière, ayant laissé le 'de telle ou telle manière', tu es devenu 'tout entier'." Similarly, we shall support Gandillac's interpretation of the crucial phrase: "devenir tout, ce n'est aucunement se désintegrer au sein d'une totale indifférentation, c'est bien plutot 'devenir totalement ce qu'on est'. . . . En rencontrant seul à seul cet Un qui seul est pleinement ce qu'il est, au dêlà du plan des 'essences', le sujet unifié, celui qui atteint au maximum possible de sa propre 'simplification', se découvre dans sa vraie 'plenitude'."[27] But if we agree, with Gandillac,

that *gegonas pas* means the totality of what one's self is, we refuse to simplify the problem of reconciling this view with that of the self's identity with the All, as he tends to do in his rendering of chapter 12,24 ff. He translates "tu t'augmentes donc toi-même en abandonnant ce qui est autre que toi, et par cet abandon *tu es tout* entier présent à toi" (italics ours) – that is, he sees in *to pan* the totality of the self, the *pas* of line 19, and understands the phrase as indicating the self-presence of this "simplified" self. We cannot agree with this, either philologically (the *pan* is constantly referred to in the third person in the subsequent lines, and clearly means the Intelligible All), or – as will be shown – philosophically, and we adduce the translations of Harder ("Du wirst dich also grösser machen, wenn du das andere forttust, und durch dies Forttun *ist dir das Ganze da*") and MacKenna-Page ("By the lessening of the Alien in you, you increase. Cast it aside and *there is the All within you*") in our support. But how the self, to which the All is present, or which is present to the All, can remain itself individual, must now be shown.

It is in the identification of Being with knowledge, and hence in the examination of the nature of the act by which the self intelligizes Being, that a first step towards a satisfactory clarification of Plotinus' position must be made. At V 6 [24], 1,4 ff. Plotinus, dealing with self-intellection, says that in it "self-conversing, the subject is its own object". Thus, while being a unity, it becomes in the process dual. There can be no intellection without this *duality-in-unity*. Without unity, the initial phase, subject and object are external to each other, intellection will not be integral, and so not primal, uncharacteristic of *nous*; without the duality, there can be no reflexion, hence no intellection. Having thus derived his proof dialectically, Plotinus illustrates what he intends in the metaphor of two fused lights, the one standing for the intellective subject, the other for the object of intellection; of these lights, one can say *either* that the two are one, *or* that the one thing has become two. Plotinus succinctly makes his point in the chapter's final words, saying that the one thing "is dual by the fact of intellection, and

single by the fact that its intellectual object is itself", 23.

We should observe, firstly, the fact that intellection is described as proceeding from an initial unity which *dualizes* itself intellectually. One may say that all intellection implies self, precisely because it is only in the act of reflexion, which presupposes a subject, that intellection occurs. But (and this is the second observation) since this reflexion is upon the very subject of the dualized, intelligizing self, self-intellection does not lessen the unity of being – indeed, it depends for its integrity upon that unity. Hence the paradox[28] of unity-in-duality, or duality-in-unity, distinction and separability, individuality and "being All", is the only proper expression of self-intellection.

How does Plotinus apply this paradoxical answer to the problem of the retention of the ascended self's individuality? An interesting passage – IV 4 [28], 2 – is of help. Plotinus is dealing with the soul's nature "in the Intellectual", chapter 1,1, and he remarks that in the contemplative vision (*theôria*), chapter 2,4 ff., one is not so much aware of oneself as active, but, while self-possessed, one's activity (*energeia*) is towards the object of vision, and one becomes this latter and is formed by it, while remaining oneself only potentially,8.

The last remark leads to an obvious objection: "Is one then actively oneself only when one has intellection of nothing? " This cannot be, says Plotinus, for in *theôria* one is not "empty. . . of all" (in which case the objection would hold), but rather "all" (*panta*), 11, so that, in the one intuitive act, (a) "self-intuition . . .brings the intellection, not merely of the self, but also of the total therein included," and (b) "the intuition of the total of things brings that of the personal self as included among all." One recognizes here the influence of the idea of the identification of self and *panta*, noted at VI 5, 12,17 ff., and commented upon above.[29] In a sense, the self, as we saw there, is augmented by its becoming receptive of its fundamental oneness with the Whole or Intelligible All. If this is so, then Plotinus here can rightly speak of the "intuitive" self as "all" (*panta*), and conclude that intellection of *panta* is *included* in its self-intellection,

and vice versa. Furthermore, that this activity is none other than that evoked at V 6, 1 is clear from the description here of the soul's return to the Intelligible, as a return "from the constituents of the self to the self" (21 ff.), so that one can say "the contemplator is the total: duality has become unity."[30]

So far, the passage has related and reinforced previously expressed notions: in what follows, Plotinus turns to the central question of the survival of the soul as such in the Intellectual. It must of necessity enter into one-ness (*henôsis*) with *nous* by reason of its conversion, 26. But this *henôsis* does not imply, Plotinus continues, that soul loses its identity, 29: "the two are one, and two." One cannot fail to be struck by the use, once again, of the paradox of self-intellection, now clearly applied to explain how and why the human self, reverting to the Intelligible, *remains itself*, while at the same time being one with the totality of Being.

Thus it seems to be precisely in this paradox that Plotinus asserts the individuality of self in the All. Hence we may, with confidence, reaffirm the above, explanatory rendering of VI 5, 12,24 ff.,[31] against that of Gandillac, who, in stressing the motif of entire self-presence, fails to account for that of the simultaneous presence of the All; Plotinus would say that each implies the other. Our question, "Is self retained at intelligible level?" would appear to have the answer "Yes – and necessarily so."

The limit of the significance which one can attach to the aspect of "dehumanization" at V 8 [31], 7,31 ff. has already been commented upon.[32] But not until this stage of our investigation were we in a position to realize the sense of the phrases "he has ceased to be the All," and "restored to the Whole he is maker of the Whole," 32 ff. At the intelligible level, the previous passages have assured us, self is one with the All, the Whole, and can be called "maker of the Whole" because its intellection *is* the Intelligible Whole or Being, not merely in the sense of being identical with the latter, but because, moreover, it necessarily maintains it in existence.[33] And from the previous passages it may be inferred that one's

ceasing to be "man" in no way compromises one's individuality at this level: for the Whole and the self can be said to be a duality-in-unity, and vice versa.

In discussing the completeness of the Intelligible, whose *raison d'être* is its existence, Plotinus (VI 7 [38], 2,51 ff.) takes the example of man at intelligible level. It is best to quote the passage in its entirety: οἷον [καὶ] ἀνθρώπου πᾶς προεφάνη ὁ ἄνθρωπος συμφέρων ἑαυτὸν αὑτῷ, καὶ πάντα ὅσα ἔχει ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁμοῦ ἔχων ἕτοιμός ἐστιν ὅλος. εἶτα, εἰ μὴ πᾶς ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ δεῖ τι αὑτῷ προσθεῖναι, γεννητός ἐστιν. ἔστι δ' ἀεί· ὥστε πᾶς ἐστιν. It is interesting to see how Plotinus derives the notion of man's being complete or entire (*pas*) from the perfection of the Idea in which nothing is lacking. Furthermore, the sense of *pas* as applied to man is unmistakably that of "complete, entire" – the equivalent of *holos*, 54. *Pas estin* – "he is complete" : we are surely justified in translating thus on the basis of *gegonas pas* at VI 5, 12,19, and so answering the question posed above[34] in terms agreeing with Gandillac's rendering of "devenir totalement ce qu'on est". However, it remains clearly possible that when Plotinus speaks of the self becoming *pas* the notion of one's becoming, in some sense, a *totality* of All Being is not absent from his mind. Thus, if we turn to the difficult, late passage III 2 [47], 14,15 ff., fresh, richer ambiguities are apparent.

Plotinus starts by asserting that in the transcendental each entity (*pan*) is everything (*panta*), whereas here below *ou panta hekaston* – the individual thing is not all, but is, we might add, a "self" and not the Total. Thus man insofar as he is a partial individual *ou pas*. How do we translate? "Not complete", certainly: but from the preceding discussion one must allow "not the Total" as well. The next sentence contains a similar ambiguity. When something not a part, says Plotinus – and he means thereby an Intelligible – associates itself with beings of part, the partial becomes in consequence *pan*. Again, what does *pan* mean? It certainly means "the partial becomes complete": but it can also be argued here that the partial can be meant to have, in consequence, a share in the totality of the Intelligible; that, in other words, its

completeness may in fact consist in its belonging to this total.

Continuing, Plotinus asserts of the individual that one cannot demand that he have attained to the summit of goodness, for he would then be no longer individual. We have without doubt here a reference to the "man" or self of historical process, the self of the *dianoêtikon*, or even the *eidôlon* of IV 3, 27,8. Its lack of perfection is due to a type of individuality that implies separation from true Being, and not to that individuality which is here in question, the identity of self maintainable even at intelligible level. That this is so becomes clear in the following.

What Plotinus says, in effect, is that the whole "bears no grudge" against any part that achieves goodness or beauty, for such achievement is an embellishment of the whole. Furthermore, the lesser increases by becoming like the greater, by coming to share in its rank: even in man's place, insofar as he becomes like the whole, III 2,14, 25, ἐκλάμπῃ τι ἐν αὑτῷ, οἷον καὶ κατὰ τὸν θεῖον οὐρανὸν τὰ ἄστρα.

In other words, the light of the individual's beauty, like that of the stars, is an embellishment of the whole – *as an individual*, be it noted. Continuing, Plotinus says – and the words are difficult — καὶ ἡ ἐντεῦθεν ἀντίληψις οἷον ἀγάλματος μεγάλου καὶ καλοῦ εἴτε ἐμψύχου εἴτε καὶ τέχνῃ Ἡφαίστου γενομένου κτλ. On the one hand we can interpret, with MacKenna, "all appears one great and lovely figure," that is, man takes his place as a part of this whole; on the other hand, it is possible to emphasize the notion of *antilêpsis* rather than that of the whole, and to say, as Theiler – following Harder – does, that it is connected with the *power of vision* inherent in the *eklampsis* of the self, and beholding the firmament as a divine body.[35] Both versions seem valid to us – in fact, they highlight the essential paradox of individuality and Being noted above:[36] man, perfected, is fully aware of the real, here symbolically the *universum* (Harder-Theiler); but man can also be said, "like. . . the stars", to *be seen to be* (*antilêpsis*!) a part, a light, in this real whole, and – we might add – as part of such an intelligible whole, to be identified with it in its entirety (MacKenna).

But how can the partial be the whole at the level of Being? We must now return to some passages in which this aspect of the nature of *nous* is considered.

In VI 2 [43], 20,1 ff., Plotinus distinguishes between "two phases of Intellect". On the one hand, there is that which has no contact with the partial, and so can never be a particular intellect (2); on the other, there are these particular intellects (12). To clarify their relation, Plotinus adduces the example of science (*epistêmê*),[37] as being prior to its constituents, and, in the case of specific sciences, likewise, the *potentiality* of all its parts; similarly, he continues, the particulars are actually themselves, potentially the sum of all, 5 f. The Aristotelian concepts of potency and act, here introduced, are then applied to intellect, 10 ff. Intellect as a whole is said to be prior to actualized individual intellects – it is their potentiality (13); it involves them in its wholeness. They, in turn, involve it in their partial nature. Each exists in itself, but is nonetheless included[38] in the other, 17 ff. – the term of mutual inclusion was already noted above[39] in IV 4, 2,13 f., and it was there suggested that Plotinus maintains that the particular necessarily implies the whole, and vice versa. The same is maintained here, with the new refinement that the two factors are now related rationally by means of the reciprocal potency-act concept, "All the particulars exist potentially in that self-existent universal, which actually is the totality, potentially each isolated member; on the other hand, each particular is actually what it is, potentially the totality," 20 ff.

One cannot fail to be impressed by the facility with which Plotinus here rationalizes the mechanism of Intellect as Whole and Particular. Just as he utilizes the implications of the concept of reflexion, of self-intellection to highlight, in a credible way, his fundamental intuition about the nature of *nous*,[40] so here he approaches the phenomenon from another angle, and a new aspect – of reciprocal potentiality and actuality – of its entire, yet internally differentiated nature is evoked. It is not without a sense of his own mastery of the process of his explanation that he can conclude, in

chapter 21,53 ff., that all (real) things exist forever, "involved by their very existence in eternity", and that "Individuals have their separate entities, but are one in the [total] unity." And, he adds, "the complex . . .of them all, thus combined, is *nous*."

Plotinus relates this exposé of the nature of *nous* to man, and in particular, to the human self, in I 1 [53], 8,1 ff. There he says that "this also (*nous*) we [i.e., the self] possess as the summit of our being." He is speaking of the psychic self, which as we saw, is sometimes retained by Plotinus in his account of the self at intelligible level, as at V 3, 8,47 ff.,[41] or IV 4, 2,29 ff.[42] – such passages express the complex relationship of a self identifiable as *dianoêtikon* with *nous* proper.[43] They may seem, at first sight, to stand in contradiction to the texts where the self appears to be nous pure and simple, but they are ultimately to be explained as attempts to grasp the notion of "intellectual life", of "oneness with the intelligible" from the viewpoint of here and now, of the historical process. In each case, Plotinus' starting-point is the relation of the self of process to the higher, the intelligible – he cannot therefore proceed to annihilate the psychic self in favour of some new, transformed nature: the psychic self obviously survives and co-exists with the higher. Thus his method and his language will be different from those of passages where his prime assumption is that the self is intelligible in nature. Since the previous chapter has shown us adequately that the self is observable and realizable, at various levels, according to the aspect of man considered, or according to the type of life lived, we should not confuse investigation of various *niveaux* with contradictory viewpoints in Plotinus' thought.

Of the self, then, Plotinus says in our passage (I 1,8) that it possesses "*nous* itself" (2) either as common to all or as a personal possession, or – he corrects himself – commonly (*koinon*, 4) *and* individually (*idion, ibid.*). Common to all, because it is "indivisible, one, everywhere and always its entire self", and individually, because each individual possesses it, entire (*holon*), in the intellectual phase of his soul.

This is clearly an application, carefully nuanced, of the teaching outlined above on the *total, entire character* of the intelligible universe, on the one hand, and its *particular aspects* on the other. Plotinus has related these aspects to the presence of *nous* in the self – starting from the subjective viewpoint of the latter. Thus the total Whole becomes the *nous* which we have in common with all men, and its particular aspect becomes that entire presence of the same *nous* in each one of us, precisely because we are nonetheless individuals in spite of our common possession of it, and because it cannot be divided, and so is entirely "in" each of us. In this way, Plotinus gives expression to the theme of total unity and individuality under yet a new aspect – to that theme which, as we have shown, is the centre of his account of man's nature at *nous* level.

Reflexion: Man's Self-knowledge at *Nous* Level

We must now turn to the question of self-knowledge *sensu stricto*, of that knowledge which is no mere awareness or realization of the nature of one's self, but actual *reflexion*,[44] which presupposes an essential *unity of subject and object*, the latter being no more than subsequently articulated polarities, derived in the analysis of the nature of that unity.

Texts bearing upon the nature of intelligible reflexion have already been mentioned.[45] They stress vital moments in the unfolding of Plotinus' thought, and they will be included in the short scheme now to be delineated. This scheme will indicate that when we speak of "unfolding" of thought in this context, we have in mind less a chronological than a systematic development. For once in the present work, the chronological order will give way to an argumentative order: this is justified by the facts (a) that all the elements of his thought on reflexion appear to be present in Plotinus' writings *ab initio*,[46] and (b) that where Plotinus himself thinks systematically, we shall do best to follow a similar method.

The scheme, which serves to initiate our inquiry, consists of three theorems, each of which, in a sense, makes the foregoing more explicit. The first theorem is to be derived from the controversial passage V 1 [10], 7,4-6. Plotinus is dealing with the *quaestio vexata* of his system, how *nous* can derive from the a-noetic, hyperontic One. ἀλλ' οὐ νοῦς ἐκεῖνο· πῶς οὖν νοῦν γεννᾷ; ἢ ὅτι τῇ ἐπιστροφῇ πρὸς αὐτὸ ἑώρα· ἡ δὲ ὅρασις αὕτη νοῦς. The immediate philological problem is: which is the subject of ἑώρα, ἐκεῖνο, i.e. the absolute One, or *nous*? Henry-Schwyzer in their edition quote the rendering of Marsilio Ficino – *quia videlicet genitum conversione quadam ad genitorem inspicit* – that is, they support his rendering of *nous (genitum)* as subject. At first sight, this rendering would appear to make the text meaningless. For, one might argue, Plotinus would then be asking, "How does the One produce *nous*? and answering by saying "Because *nous* looks upon the One" – in other words, assuming an act of conversion on the part of an already produced *nous*, instead of accounting for the latter's production. What is more, the unexpectedly brusque change of subject, which would be involved in having *nous* as subject of ἑώρα, is difficult, as even Henry, a supporter of the change of subject,[47] admits. Such considerations, allied to the fact that a certain self-consciousness of the One appears to be suggested in line 12 of the same chapter, as well as at V 4, 2,17, led O. Becker to make *ekeino* the subject of the phrase, and to paraphrase it in the following terms: "Die Einheit bringt den Geist hervor, indem sie sich auf sich selbst hinwendet, und diese Art von Sehen ist der Geist."[48] The commentators have since remained divided on the matter. Bréhier and Harder have agreed with Becker; and in addition to Henry and Schwyzer, Cilento, Theiler and Krämer[49] – as well as Volkmann-Schluck[50] – have disagreed, and preferred the reading of Ficino. The latter would coincide with Plotinus' normal teaching on the One's absence of thought or consciousness of any kind[51] – for even if Becker had argued for an early ("in noch unentwickelter Terminologie") belief in the One's consciousness, which he tried to convey by the term "Selbstgefühl",[52] he did not, as Schwyzer points

out,[53] pay enough attention to Plotinus' use of the qualifying particle *οἷον* in those texts which he quotes. But the question remains: even if *nous* is the subject of the disputed phrase, how can one account for the sudden change of subject, and how can the phrase purport to answer the question preceding it?

The philological problem can best be solved by philological means, which, in turn, can be applied to the context of the whole. The question πῶς νοῦν γεννᾷ; can be seen to mean more than "How does the One produce nous?": by reason of the emphatic position of *noun* one can translate it as follows – "How is it that the One produces *nous*?" or "How is it that what is produced, τὸ γεννώμενον – Ficino's *genitum* – is *nous*?" seeing – as the context has just told us – that the One is not *nous*? This alters the meaning of the passage radically. We are not now dealing with the creative act of the One *per se*, but with the fact, subsequent to creation (which remains unexplained), that the created is *intelligence*. And Plotinus accounts for this by saying that it is intelligence because of its conversion towards the One. This latter explanation, as Theiler has pointed out,[54] has been given, in some more detail, at V 2, 1,8 ff., where it is said that the One creates an "other", and that then "this product has turned again to its begetter and been filled and has become its contemplator and so a *nous*." Furthermore, the notion of these two phases – that of the procession of the unlimited principle from the One, which in turn becomes determined in its conversion towards the One and – a third phase – thus becomes *nous*[55] – this notion is the basic teaching of Plotinus on the establishment of the hypostasis of *nous*.[56] We understand the passage in question to have this sense, and from it we would formulate the first theorem on reflexion as follows:

> the primal reflexion is that of *nous* upon the One, and is the act constitutive of *nous*.[57]

The second theorem derives directly from a passage already commented on above – V 6 [24], 1,1 ff.[58] Let us recall the key phrase: of the intellective principle, reflexive, it

is said that "while being a unity, it becomes dual." In other words,

> reflexion is of an initial unity which becomes dual in the act of reflexion.

From our analysis of this passage above, we saw that the "unity" spoken of here is co-existent with its reflexive duality, is neither prior to it nor removed by it. And precisely because it is the unity of a multiple (*ibid.*, chapter 5,1 ff.), it is to be distinguished from the One, which is "in every respect One": this multiple has reflexive self-awareness, which is denied to the One.

Thus, whereas the first theorem deals with the conversion of *nous* upon the One, the second deals with its conversion upon itself.

The third theorem on reflexion has already been formulated at the beginning of the present work.[59] At VI 7 [38], 41,19 ff., and again at V 3 [49], 13,17 ff., Plotinus stresses that

> reflexion is essential to maintaining the identity of the twofold intellect with itself.

This theorem derives from the second insofar as it presupposes the dualized unity of that theorem. For it is the unity of *nous*, "become dual", which must maintain itself by the unifying act of reflexion, in which it is present to itself, though double.

These theorems will serve as guiding-lines of our subsequent discussion, for reflexion is implied in the concept man at *nous* level. To a consideration of this reflexion, or, as Plotinus will call it, self-knowledge, we must now turn our attention.

A first indication of the accepted notion that man, as *nous*, has self-knowledge is given in the passage IV 7 [2], 10,32 ff.[60] Let us briefly recall the words of Plotinus, that purified man "sees himself thus entered into the pure, the Intellectual. For, what he sees is a *nous*. . . by its own eternity having intellection of the eternal . . .himself having become an intelligible universe. . . " The significance is clear: man, in self-vision, sees what he himself is, that is, *nous*.

Subject and object are identical: man is himself the intelligible universe.

The converse of the notion that man, as *nous*, knows himself – namely, that self-knowledge implies man's being real intelligible Being, is to be observed in Plotinus' interpretation of a Heraclitus fragment at V 9 [5], 5,31. The whole of chapter 5 can be described as the *locus classicus* in Plotinus for the ideas that (a) *nous is* what it intelligizes, and (b) *nous* is Being. In this context Plotinus quotes as Heraclitus' thought "I investigated myself,"[61] adding that this investigation of oneself was possible through the self's being "one of the real Beings". In his interpretation of Heraclitus, Plotinus adduces the Platonic tenet that only real Being is susceptible of rational investigation: thus, he says, Heraclitus' investigation of self was legitimate (29) insofar as it implied that man was one of the "Beings" by the fact of his being a *nous*, and so could really know himself.

This notion, that in self-intellection the object of our knowledge is an intelligible reality, which we are, is expressed at III 9 [13], 6. We see, says Plotinus, an intellective nature (1), the reality of a knowing nature (3). The means by which he seems to explain why this must be so are obscure and unsatisfactory:[62] what follows is but a tentative attempt to explain his argumentation. The words "before that intellection", etc. (3 ff.), are a recapitulation of chapter 1,15 ff. of the same "treatise", which distinguishes between νοῦν ... ἐν στάσει καὶ ἑνότητι καὶ ἡσυχίᾳ (= νόησις οἷον ἥσυχος, 6,4) and τὴν δὲ τοῦ νοῦ φύσιν τοῦ ὁρῶντος ἐκεῖνον τὸν νοῦν (=νοερὰν οὖσαν φύσιν νοοῦμεν, 6,3) τὸν ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνέργειάν τινα ἀπ' ἐκείνου, ἣ ὁρᾷ ἐκεῖνον.[63] Implicitly, then, the *active* intelligence in chapter 6 is equivalent to the latter *nous*, the manifestation in act of chapter 1. This is corroborated by the phrases ὅσα ἐνέργειαι, 6,6 f. — the subject of εἶδεν, *ibid.* — and αἱ ἐνέργειαι, 6,7. These *activities*, says Plotinus, are intelligences, insofar as they are self-knowing activities (7 f.); that is, he applies the theorem that reflexion is *nous*. Now precisely because *nous* is self-knowing, i.e. its own object, it can be called a νοητόν. Thus Plotinus can conclude τὸ νοητὸν

ἡμεῖς οἱ ὄντως, 8, and so prove his thesis. The argument is cumbersome, but has an inner coherence.[64]

Plotinus does not refrain from proclaiming his belief that within the self is to be found the reality of Being, of *nous*, and that this can best be – can, indeed, only be – grasped by reflexion. At VI 6 [34],8,8 ff. he says that, abstracted from all perception, "One should contemplate *nous* by means of *nous* alone, and reflect that within ourselves is life and *nous*." Similarly, at III 5 [50], 7,53 ff., he says "in each particular human being we must admit the existence of intellective act and knowable object (*noêsin kai noêton*), so that it exists at once in us, and absolutely."[65]

The integral self-knowledge of *nous*, and hence, in consequence, of man as *nous*, is generally taken for granted by Plotinus. Only on a few occasions does he feel called upon to assert this explicitly, and to contrast reflexion with what are, for him, deficient modes of awareness. It will be instructive to examine these few passages, in order to clarify further our notion of reflexion.

At the beginning of his most comprehensive survey of the problem of self-intellection, Plotinus states (V 3 [49], 1,15 ff.) that it is absurd to deny this faculty to *nous*, which knows all other intellectual objects, but would, on this assumption, be ignorant of itself, "the being whose function it is to know just these things", lines 21 ff. But, he pursues, what can the nature of this self-intellection be? Could it be confined to knowledge of *the fact* that it knows (24), without knowing its *intelligizing self* (25)? In this case, its knowledge were simply *awareness* of its cognitive faculty, and the latter's activity, and would be no more than a type of partial knowledge, of one phase knowing other phases, which was not admitted as self-knowledge at the beginning of the chapter on the ground that such knowledge is "merely something that knows something else", 12.

Plotinus will rule out this awareness-as-self-knowledge theory explicitly in the fifth chapter of the treatise, to which some attention will be devoted: first of all, however, it should be remarked that at II 9 [33], 1,33 ff. Plotinus argues

from the structure of *nous* itself that it is impossible to separate the activity of intellection from awareness of the activity. The passage should be related to V 3, 1,15 f., even if it starts from a different problem, that of a plurality of intelligences (in fact, two), of which the prior in each case is the awareness of the later's intellectual activity. Formally, its distinctions are the same, that is, between a *nous* "that knows" and one "knowing that it knows", 34. Now Plotinus undertakes to show that *even conceptually* such a distinction of intellection and awareness of intellection is untenable. Having commented (44 ff.) on the absurdity of a knowing principle so limited that it is unaware that it knows, a limitation which, in a human context, would be considered equivalent to idiocy, Plotinus goes on to stress that the nature of "true *nous*" is to know itself, since it is, itself, the object of its intellection, and because such integral knowledge ("not from outside", 47) implies that this object be a knowing object. And, Plotinus concludes, if the object is knowing, the notion of double reflexion, of the fact that another *nous* is aware of the intellectual activity of the first, is rendered superfluous.

The crux of the argument is that this object of intellection is supposedly knowing – is, in fact, the self, the knowing subject. At II 9, 1 Plotinus does not, however, seek to *prove this:* he simply infers that it is so, and we must return to V 3 for a proof. In chapter 5 of that treatise, Plotinus first returns to the opening problem of the discussion – is self-knowledge simply a matter of one phase knowing another? Since this would involve a "partition" of *nous*, for which an agent cannot be found, and even were it possible, "in such self-knowledge by sundering it can be aware only of the object, not of the agent," we must conclude that "... it would not know its entire content, or itself as an integral whole," and this knowledge is not self-knowledge. Identity of seer and seen is *a priori* necessary for self-knowledge (21 ff.), which, being truth, is an interiorized, self-concentrated act (25 f.). But does such identity assure self-knowledge? It is this question which Plotinus must answer. He does so by

returning to a consideration of what the intellectual object must be, 32 ff. It is, he says, an *energeia*, it has life, and is "the primal reality": if it is such a primal *energeia*, then it is also *intellection in act*, it is "intellection possessing real Being", and such an intellection can be no more than, or less than "primal *nous*", itself also an *energeia*. Plotinus can now draw his conclusion in the form of a syllogism (V 3, 5,41):

> εἰ οὖν ἐνέργεια καὶ ἡ οὐσία αὐτοῦ ἐνέργεια, ἓν
> καὶ ταὐτὸν τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ ἂν εἴη (*sc.* ὁ νοῦς)
> ἓν δὲ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τὸ ὂν καὶ τὸ νοητόν (as proved
> in lines 32–35).
> ἓν ἅμα πάντα ἔσται, νοῦς, νόησις, τὸ νοητόν.

The key to the argument lies in the *linking concepts* of *energeia* and *noêsis*: *noêton* and *nous* are identified with these, so that in fact intellection is seen as one all-embracing activity in which the subjective and objective moments can, retrospectively, be isolated. In lines 44 ff. the implications of this identity of *noêsis*, *to noêton* and *autos* (*nous*) are fully worked out. It is in this way that Plotinus resolves the above-mentioned problem of the knowing nature of the object of knowledge: it is knowing insofar as it is *energeia* (which it *must* be, 32 ff.).

This theory of self-knowledge is given logical coherence of a more precise sort at VI 2 [43], 8,11 ff., where Plotinus, speaking of intellection, distinguishes its two moments. On the one hand, there is intellection, that is, *energeia* and *kinêsis*; on the other, there is the factor of *self*-intellection, in which the intellect, centered upon *itself*, is "Substance and Being". As Being it thinks (13), and it thinks its Being, as that reality upon which it depends. Thus, strictly speaking, the act of intellection is not Being, but Being is the source and goal of that act: yet again, because it is source and goal it is involved in intellection. Moreover, because it is *in act* (16), intellection "bridges the dualism" of subject and object, of intellect and being; as *energeia* it identifies itself with Being, and vice versa.

The line of argument here is significant. Starting from a logical distinction (of Act and Being), which would seem to

contradict V 3, 5,35, which identified the intellectual object as Being in Act, Plotinus first involves the vision of intellection in Being (15 f.) and then, by means of the concept of Act, clarifies their actual identity. In this way, while remaining faithful to the notion of moments or aspects of intellection which come to a concrete identity in the idea of the latter as an act, he can reach substantially the same conclusion as in V 3, 5.

It has been stressed that at V 3, 5,21 ff. the identity of seer and seen – and, hence, the interiorized nature of self-knowledge – is essential to the act of reflexion. This is similarly suggested in another passage, V 8 [31], 10,35 ff., "the clear-eyed hold the vision within themselves." This is described as a vision of the "divinity within", 43, but chapter 11,1 ff. makes it clear that this "god" (*nous*) is the self, and that self-identity (4) is the aim. Such perfect vision, which is described in terms of reflexion, as we isolated this latter in the theorems formulated above (in particular, the maintenance of identity in duality, of reflexion as the guarantee of this, 5 f. = Theorem 3) – such vision is contrasted with that type of awareness already shown to be deficient at V 3, 5 and II 9, 1. Thus Plotinus, in chapter 11,10, "at the beginning, he is aware of himself, so long as he is alientated"; V 3, 5,25, "truth cannot have something alien as its content, but must be that which it affirms"; II 9, 1,39, "it [i.e. the deficient mode of awareness] knows that it knows, whereby the subject of its knowledge is other than itself, and not itself." Then, making an important, if inevitable transition, Plotinus says that such vision is in fact a new *ontological determination* of the self, 20, "to see the divine as something external is to be outside of it; *to become it* is to be most truly in beauty." This is self-awareness (23) in unity: "we are most completely aware of ourselves when we are most completely identified with the object of our knowledge," 31. In other words, it is precisely in the act of reflexion that man exercises the intelligible aspect of his being, in accordance with the principle of spontaneous determination of being first outlined in III 4,[66] and thus one can say that man,

insofar as he is reflexive, is *nous*, for reflexion is the ontological hypostasis.[67] In this manner, the notion of reflexion is integrated into our concept of the self's freedom deriving from the previous chapter.

At V 6 [24], 5,1 ff. Plotinus repeats the notion, expressed in our third theorem on reflexion,[68] that what is multiple, always seeking its identity, desires "self-accord and self-awareness". Such a multiple is intellection, a secondary to the primal, unreflecting Good: intellection, indeed, is a movement towards the Good (8), and, in consequence of this, we can say that intellection is the working of the *agathoeides* (13) in *nous*, a recognition of its likeness with the Good, and a desire to possess in reflexion this likeness to the supreme as something good in itself. Thus self-intellection is not "deliberate", καὶ γὰρ αὖ ἐν τῇ νοήσει αὑτοῦ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς αὑτὸ νοεῖ· πρὸς γὰρ τὸ ἀγαθὸν βλέπον αὑτὸ νοεῖ, 16.

What Plotinus is stressing here is the relative nature of self-knowledge in his philosophy, at the summit of which stands the vision of the Good, or One. In this sense, the present passage is a transition to our next chapter, which is to deal with the self at that level: it sets the limited nature of *nous* as an *agathoeides* in its context, and, hence, of reflexion as the awareness of a "manifestation of the Good", 15. The nature of Plotinian self-knowledge is nicely articulated by comparing this passage with one in the Aristotelian commentator, Alexander of Aphrodisias, a passage quoted by P. Merlan[69] as establishing a link between Plotinus and Alexander. In it,[70] Alexander, speaking of Aristotle's *De Anima* 429b9, says that in the knowledge of immaterial *noêta*, when act and object are one, man attains to self-knowledge, but only *κατὰ συμβεβηκός* (cf. text quoted above!) – for what man knows then is primarily only the immaterial *noêta*: that he himself is this *noêton* he perceives only incidentally. Merlan does not quote the Plotinus passage, which is nonetheless an interesting parallel, and, though its sense is different from Alexander's, may betray – particularly in the use of the notion of accident applied to

self-knowledge – an influence of Alexander upon Plotinus. If that were so, it would strengthen the thesis of Merlan's, and, in this particular case, make the "link" between the two writers clearer than Merlan suspects it to be. For while in Plotinus self-knowledge is relative to unifying vision of the Good, in Alexander the self-knowledge implied in knowledge of immaterial intelligibles is (as Merlan implies – correctly, we think) relative to the true self-knowledge of the *nous poêtikos*, no longer, as Merlan says, *per accidens*. The latter self-knowledge is, of course, equivalent to the self-knowledge found relative by Plotinus, whereas the former would be akin to the awareness of V 3, 5 and II 9, 1; so that – despite the parallel – this difference of *niveaux* illustrates well the distinction between the Platonist, whose concepts transcend the intellectual, and the Aristotelian, whose highest is reached in *noêsis noêseôs*.

It is interesting to compare V 6, 5 with another unique passage, I 4 [46], 4,6 ff. Man, says Plotinus, has perfect life when he possesses "reason and true *nous*". What then, he asks (18), is the Good for such a man? The answer "He himself by what he has and is" may surprise, but Plotinus quickly stresses that this "Good" is not the hypostasis Good[71]: he makes the distinction clear by saying that "the transcendant Good is only the cause of the Good in him [i.e. man]; that It is Good, is to be distinguished from the fact, that It manifests Itself in him," 19 f. This special mode of presence of the Good might be compared with its "presence" as *agathoeides* at V 6, 5,13 f. Again, on the grounds of that passage, and because we are in fact dealing with the possession of a "perfect life", which is "reason and true *nous*", we may infer that the "Good for man", described as "himself", to which he is related in the mode of reflexion, is none other than *intelligible*: that is, it is *nous*.

Both V 6, 5 and I 4, 4 relate self-knowledge to the overriding claims of vision of the Good: they stress the limited, derived nature of the former, and, insofar as they describe it as the activity of an *agathoeides*, relate it directly to that concept of *nous* as a Being which proceeds from the

Supreme (*to hen* = *to agathon*), and is, through conversion, determined by It – the concept typified in the first theorem on reflexion above.[72]

4. The Self and the One

When we turn to consider the survival and nature of the self in the moment of *unio mystica*, there is a serious formal difficulty which prejudices all our efforts to remain philosophically coherent. Since the mystical vision, by definition, breaks the bounds of intelligible categories, it cannot, strictly speaking, be analysed in rational terms. As Karl Jaspers says, "In der Bewusstlosigkeit oder 'Ueberbewusstheit' des Unmittelbaren der unio sind Gegenstände und Ich verschwunden. Jede Bewusstheit von Etwas und von mir selbst ist aufgelöst. Die Subjekt-Objekt Spaltung ist nicht mehr. Es handelt sich, von uns her gesehen, um einen Ausnahmezustand, aus dem der ihn Erfahrende zurückkehrt und etwas mitzubringen scheint, als ob es ein Wissen sei."[1] Because of the disappearance of the subject-object distinction, even on the level of awareness, the language used, after the event, to speak of the experience will be *approximate*, evocative rather than analytical. Yet the philosophical mystic – and, hence, Plotinus *par excellence* – aware that the experience of union with the Absolute is the culmination of his thought, rather than its contradiction, attempts to relate this description, no matter how tentatively, to the remainder of this thought. That is to say, he tends to analyse rather than merely to evoke. Or, in Jasper's words, he assumes the *experience* to be *knowledge* ("als ob es ein Wissen sei"). To be more explicit, he raises the question of the identity of subject and object in the moment of union. Nor is this totally unjustifiable – for he observes, rightly, that he survives, as self, this moment, that his idenrity is resumed after it ("der ihn Erfahrende zurückkehrt"). Hence he may properly ask: does the self *really* disappear in the moment of *unio*? And whether it does or not, what faculty

experiences and "sees" – for we are somehow aware that "we" have experienced and "seen" afterwards? These questions lie behind several meditations of Plotinus, to which we must now turn. That Plotinus should have asked them is not surprising – not merely for the reasons here evoked, but also since the previous chapters have shown him to have been preoccupied by the problem of the self's nature, of the identity of the human subject at various levels of experience.

Plotinus' favourite evocation of mystical union is through metaphors of *light*. Thus at I 6 [1], 9 the self (*autos*, 18) *is* the "only veritable light", and "when you perceive that you have grown to this, you are now become very vision,"22.[2] A transformation of the "everyday" self is in question: at chapter 9,7 ff. it is said that man can work upon this transformation. Plotinus, as Harder has pointed out,[3] has subtly rewritten the image of the *Phaedrus* (252d), so that the "statue" (*agalma*) becomes the self:[4] *erôs* has become, in Harder's expression, *Autoerotik*. Thus at chapter 5 Plotinus can speak to the "lovers" (9) who "when you see that you yourselves are beautiful within. . . long to be one with your self," 5 ff. Similarly, at chapter 9,15 ff., ". . . you have become this perfect work [i.e. the *agalma*], and have had vision of it, and you are self-gathered in the purity of your being. . ." In the simpler language of the *Phaedrus* it was a question of communion with the beloved. For Plotinus – we can conclude – it is in a heightening of *self-possession*, of *self-concentration*, carried to its extreme, that vision occurs; if the self experiences unification (17), it is *entirely as itself*, 18.

Similar language is used in the celebrated passage IV 8 6, 1,1 ff., which speaks of an awakening "into myself; becoming . . self-encentered. . .acquiring identity with the divine(5); stationing within it. . .poised above whatever else is intellectual". The self is "stationing" in identity with the divine: it is "in the One" *as itself*, and, indeed, in possession of itself most fully, that this "stationing" occurs. Now it is axiomatic for Plotinus that entry into selfhood is the way to attainment of unity with the Highest (VI 9, 2,35). In the present

context, however, the self is said to be "in" the divine, 6: that is to say, not as *nous*, but as *hypernoetic*. Does Plotinus intend us to understand that the self, in mystical union, transcends the category even of *nous*?[5]

Another treatise gives an explicit answer to this question. In VI 9 [9], 9,55 Plotinus first stresses that it is with the entirety of the self that one has mystical vision. Indeed, this vision is of the Absolute *and* oneself together (57). But one can scarcely speak of vision,[6] for, as Harder says, ". . . es sich nicht eigentlich um Sehen, sondern um Einswerden handelt".[7] And since it is a question of becoming Unity, of a complete absence of differentiation between subject and object, one cannot speak (chapter 11,8 ff.) of movement, desire, or even reason on the part of the human self. Indeed, adds Plotinus, one cannot even conceive of the self's existence at this state: "it is not quite itself" – then, correctively, "if one, indeed, may say this". There is even mention (line 23) of an *ekstasis*, a "going forth from the self" (MacKenna). But this would appear to contradict the words of chapter 9,55, and, hence, of the above passages, and – far from answering the question of whether *nous* is transcended in *unio* – makes that question superfluous. Can Plotinus really mean that the self is annihilated?

Plotinus' attitude may be clarified later in the same chapter 11, 35 ff., where he says that the psychic nature – and here he means the subject of *unio* – can never "touch utter nothingness": to non-being perhaps, as in the case of evil, but not to absolute non-being. Now this is equivalent to saying that soul – or the self – *can never be annihilated*, and Plotinus corroborates this in his next words. The ascending soul, he says, does not proceed "to something alien" (39), but *to itself*, and, in being in no other than itself it is in the Absolute. Now this being in the Absolute and not in Being can only mean that the self in *unio* is "beyond Being", is *hyperontic*: "There is thus a converse in virtue of which the essential man outgrows Being, becomes transcendent of Being." If the self is hyperontic, then it transcends *nous* which *is* Being, and so, again, it is *hypernoetic*.

In these phrases Plotinus assures at once the reality of the self in *unio*, and its reality above *nous*. The self, we may say, is totally *one with the One*, but as a subject, as *itself*. Plotinus, in the same chapter, speaks of the "solitary" (51) which is "likeness of the Supreme", 43. We recognize in this new, indisputable reality of the self a further type of that self-determination of the self's reality at different levels, which has so often been cited as the fundamental Plotinian notion of the self. Of this latest "self" we can, indeed, say that it is an "absolute" self: the self of chapter 11,11, on the other hand, is the self of history – this is shown to be the case at chapter 10,15, where Plotinus, speaking of *unio*, says that self "is changed, no longer himself nor self-belonging; he is merged with the Supreme. . . one with it". All Plotinus means, then, by the "annihilation" of self is the transformation of the "everyday" self already noted above.[8]

Nonetheless, the nature of *unio* poses problems for Plotinus as philosopher. These are discussed at V 5 [32], 10,1 ff. On the one hand, *unio* implies direct, unmediated vision; on the other, the human self, despite its hyperontic mode, cannot be expected to experience the total power of the Absolute. Thus Plotinus: "Who could grasp Its [the Absolute's] power in all its concentrated fullness? For if one could, how could one be differentiated from It?" The distinction between the One and the self is to be maintained. As was remarked at the beginning of this chapter,[9] this distinction is made after the event and is *logical* – for the nature of mystical experience belies it. But, as we said there, the distinction is nonetheless justified, for the self is *a reality*, as was since shown, in the moment of *unio*, and not merely afterwards – despite the fact that one is *not aware* of the distinction at that moment.[10]

But, Plotinus asks, if the distinction is maintained, and if the self as self cannot experience the whole power of the One, must we then assume that vision is to be partial? This, he says, cannot be: for then the self will be merely *nous noôn* (9)[11] and will lose vision. You must, says Plotinus, "throw forward all your being" in a moment that will not be able to

articulate the totality of the One, but will simply *see* It as a whole (10).

Thus Plotinus, having gone so far in the analysis of vision as to stress its unitary nature and the transformation it wreaks upon the self, takes refuge in the last resort in the *incommunicability* of the experience evoked. As he says elsewhere, δύσφραστον τὸ θέαμα (VI 9, 10, 19). It remains an *Einswerden* which is best imaged in the phenomenon of vision. But if the One is ever-present to us, as "Good" (V 5, 12,11 ff.) – even when we are unaware of It – Plotinus nonetheless asserts that, contrary to the symptoms of the experience, this immanence of the One is not to be falsely understood (chapter 13, beginning); "moving above all that order [of the later and lower], it is cause and source of all these, and is none of them," *ibid.*, line 19. It is the same insistence of chapter 10; self and One are to be kept apart in our thought, even in the moment of *unio*.

At IV 8, 1,6 the self which experiences *unio* was described as *hypernoetic*;[12] at VI 9, 11 it was called hyperontic.[13] The question of what faculty has this experience continued to perplex Plotinus in later treatises. Already in VI 9 an ambiguity is apparent. For if self is hyperontic, it is nonetheless maintained at chapter 3,26 that "with pure *nous*, and with the summit of *nous* we are to see the all-pure." What Plotinus is thinking of here is without doubt the "flower of *nous*"[14] of the Chaldaean oracles:[15] for our present purpose, it is important that, whether it be the "summit of *nous*" or the "flower of *nous*", the subject or self is noetic, intelligible.

The ambiguity is deepened in the later III 8 [30], 9,21 ff. "... this Entity [i.e. the Good] transcends all of the intellectual nature; by what direct intuition (*epibolê*), then, can it be brought within our grasp?" The answer, Plotinus says, must be – "by virtue of what in ourselves is like it", and, he proceeds, "...in us also, there is something of that Being." In other words, "we", the self, are, in some sense, akin to the One which transcends Intellect. Thus our *nous* must retreat and tend towards the ascendant of its two

modes, so that, in having vision, *it is no longer really nous*, 29 ff. That is, Plotinus here once again assumes a total transcendence of Intellect in the *unio mystica*, although, be it noted, he tends to qualify this assertion.[16]

This assertion is supported by those of a treatise in the same *Schrift*,[17] V 5 [32], 6,19. Plotinus says there that "one wishing to contemplate what transcends the Intellectual succeeds by putting away all that is of the intellect," that is, he is to see It "as It is" and not merely to know "that It is" – although even the former is, in the case of the indefinable, hyperontic One strictly speaking impossible.[18] Similarly, at chapter 8,22, "because it is *nous*, it must see by that in it which is not *nous*." From the preceding, we know that it is the mystical vision that is in question here. Nothing, it would seem, could be less ambiguous: there *is* a *hypernoetic* faculty.

But, just when our difficulty would seem clarified, there comes another passage where Plotinus again hesitates to posit such a faculty. At II 9 [33], 9,45 ff., Plotinus urges man to temper his own importance, to allow other things their "place in the presence of the Godhead", and only to achieve identity with "God in the measure possible to the human soul" – that is, "to the point of likeness to which *nous* leads us", 51. For, warns Plotinus, "to exalt ourselves above *nous* is to fall from it." Plotinus' careful avoidance of positing hypernoetic activity here may be due partly to the specific opponents, the Gnostics, to whom the treatise is directed, and who, as lines 52 ff. state, readily posit wildly inconceivable human powers. But the phrase "to exalt ourselves above *nous* ..." has the air of an axiom about it: and it can be corroborated, implicitly, by the earlier VI 9, 3,26. Furthermore, it states anew the as yet unresolved problem: how can a faculty – a *human* faculty – subsist when it is said to transcend the highest recognizable feature of man, his *nous*? And it stresses how perplexed Plotinus was over the problem, for II 9 is the fourth and last of that connected set of treatises in the first (III 8) and third (V 5) of which the hypernoetic nature of self was elaborated.[19]

Of itself, the axiom of II 9, 9,51 f. cannot stand, for

despite the difficulties it introduces, there can be no doubt that man, in experiencing mystical vision, does transcend intellectual categories. Thus at VI 7 [38], 35,1 ff. Plotinus can assert that in the unifying vision of the One, the soul's intellectual act is dismissed, while nonetheless insisting that it was only insofar as soul became *nous* (4) that it had vision, when it was "as it were, intellectualized, and taking its stand in the realm of *nous*". In the same chapter Plotinus tries to resolve the antinomy. He first of all distinguishes a twofold power of *nous*, 19 ff.[20] The one contemplates its own contents, 20, and is a "vision of the *nous emphrôn*", 24. The other power advances to grasp intuitively (*epibolê*) its transcendent, and is Intellect loving, *nous erôn*. What Plotinus is attempting to do here is clear. Ultimately, he does not want to situate the self which experiences *unio* outside of *nous*, of the ontic realm, because of the contradictions involved. In this case, however, he must isolate an instance of *nous* which transcends its characteristic activity of reflexion, and attribute to this the vision of the One. Such an instance may be furnished by the concept of a *nous erôn*. Of this *nous* he says presently that "it has an act unattended by knowing, a vision of It [the One] by another approach", 29 f.

But the notion of a non-intellectual Intellect is quickly found unsatisfactory. At first Plotinus returns to the notion of the beginning of the chapter, that the *nous* in soul is annihilated in vision: "the soul. . . attains to that vision by – so to speak – confounding and annulling the *nous* within it", 33, but he must correct himself – "or rather the *nous* in it [soul] sees first"; then the vision enters soul, and "the two [i.e. soul and *nous*] become one."[21] In a sense, the term "soul" is used here in a compensatory sense – for nous cannot describe the whole vision, which is, in the ultimate reckoning, more than intellectual. Thus soul is identified with *self* as the subject of vision. But this identification is, in turn, found to be inadequate. In lines 42 ff. Plotinus comments that the "soul" in the moment of mystical vision knows no movement, for the Absolute knows none; neither does the Absolute live, and so, unknowing and not living, soul "is now

not even soul". But neither is it *nous* at this moment, for the Absolute does not intelligize, and in a vision where "object and act of vision have become identical" (14) "likeness must be perfect" (45). So one may conclude that vision is not perceived intellectually, *noei de oud' ekeino*, *ibid.*

Thus Plotinus' attempt to posit a *nous erôn* fails in the very chapter in which he makes it. The *aporia* of the previous chapter 34 is thus not solved. There (lines 3 ff.), it was also asserted that the soul which is enamoured of the One lays all shape aside, even the intellectual form in it: it is denuded of everything, bad or good, that "alone it may receive the Alone." This is the self most totally itself, the "solitary" of VI 9, 11,51.[22] And, as in the texts treated above, this self is, in *unio*, one with the One: "there is nothing between: here is no longer a duality but a two in one," 13. All distinction fades, "the soul. . . will give herself no foreign name, not man, not living being, not being, not all," 17. It is absorbed in the Absolute: "This she looks upon and not upon herself; and who she is that looks she has not leisure to know," 20. The remainder of the chapter describes the *apokatastasis* of the soul – the *individual* soul – and yet what is transformed is neither *psychê* nor is it *nous*. As was noted in the case of chapter 35 above, the term *psychê* appears to be chosen rather than *nous* for the faculty in question, if only because its connotations are wide, compensating for the clearly delimited function of *nous*. Yet ultimately soul, too, is discarded, and the problem remains unsolved.

Now our investigation has shown us that the faculty, or subject, of vision is the *self* at its deepest.[23] Plotinus' failure to repeat this in the above passages may be due to his having no fixed word – hence no *concept*, strictly speaking – for "self": as P. Henry has pointed out,[24] there is no word for "person", or self, in Greek, and so Plotinus uses *autos* to express the concept. He also uses *hêmeis*, or the reflexive *hauton*, as we have seen. But if the word, and the explicit, canonized concept are missing here, adequate testimony has already been given of Plotinus' clear awareness of the importance of a concept of self – whether in the historical

process or in reflexion – to account for the identity of a human subject at the several levels of existence possible to man. Plotinus cannot have been unaware of the possibility of applying this concept to the problem of the faculty which experiences *unio mystica*. That he did not establish the *category of self* explicitly may be due to the conservative tradition of the philosophy of his day – as E.R. Dodds has stressed, "Originality as such was not in demand in the third century,"[25] and yet, while *formally* being no more than an interpretation of Plato, Plotinus' thought is substantially modern, "an attempt to solve the spiritual problems of the day".[26] The present case illustrates this perfectly: although he is working successfully with the "new" concept of the self, Plotinus, out of philosophical *pietas*,[27] will insist on analysing the subject of *unio* in terms of the traditional concepts of *psychê* and *nous*. Hence his strange persistence in trying to say what is new in the language that Plato spoke.

There is another way of knowing about the nature of the self in *unio*, and that is by means of a number of remarkable statements Plotinus makes about the One, with which the human self is one in that state. Thus at V 1 [10], 11,10 Plotinus, speaking of the One "in us", says that it reveals itself in those subsequents capable of receiving it "as another self, so to speak" ("gewissermassen ein zweiter Er", Harder). That would mean that the One, a self (*autos*), is manifest, as itself, in several subsequents.[28] Or could we here understand the phrase to mean that the One is intimately present to each capable subsequent as an *alter ego*, and might the phrase be an echo of Aristotle's definition of a friend, "the friend is another self"?[29] For it is, after all, characteristic of the self as *erôn*[30] to be inseparable from the One which it loves, to no longer distinguish itself from It.

Be that as it may, the question remains, is the One to be described as a "self"? Now there is a striking passage which would seem to state this explicitly. At the end of his long treatise "On Free Will and the Will of the One," VI 8 [39], 21,32, Plotinus says that the One is "solely and essentially Itself, while all else is itself and something else". Here the

One appears to be conceived of as the principle of pure identity, the totally subjective and self-contained in a hierarchy where identity is gradually diminished at each stage of descent. We might compare another statement from the same treatise. At VI 8, 14,42 the One is said to be "cause of Himself; for Himself and of Himself He is what He is, the first self, transcendently the Self" (MacKenna). This is explicit: the One is an absolute Subject or Self. The fact was already noted by Bréhier: "l'Un de Plotin n'est ni une chose, ni un objet; il est le sujet pur, absolu, solitaire."[31] If Plotinus can say of the One that it is supremely Self, then we may be permitted to make certain conclusions concerning selfhood from his statement. First of all, selfhood, for Plotinus, would be in strict contrast to individuality. The latter is disparate, ultimately a phenomenon of *nous*, and, in particular, of the historical process, an "apostasy from the Whole", whereas the former, on the contrary, is an in-gathering, an elimination of all that is disparate. Thus the self may be said to increase in stature as it ascends: this was already the case at the level of *nous*, as was commented upon above.[32] Man, becoming *pas*, is more his real self than hitherto. Finally, if this be so, then the self, in the moment of *unio mystica*, one with the One, must, as "likeness of the Supreme" (VI 9, 11,43), by virtue of the One's transcendent, absolute nature, be, in its own way, transcendent and absolute. This would be the self which we, at our highest, are. Already in the moment of union with Being the self is described as being aware of its *limitless* nature, non-individual, VI 5, 7,15. There would seem to be adequate support here for asserting that the problem treated above, of what faculty is engaged in the act of unitive similarity with the One, can be solved by showing that the One is *par excellence* the Self, and that, hence, the human subject of *unio* is none other than the self. As Bréhier says, "La réalité de l'Un correspond à l'affirmation de l'autonomie radicale de la vie spirituelle lorsque cette vie est saisie en elle-même. . . dans sa plénitude concrète."[33] And, speaking of the hypostases as subjects, "il n'existe, dans la réalité véritable, rien de tel que des choses; il n'existe que des

sujets qui contemplent, et chez qui la contemplation, comme dans les monades de Leibniz, est à un degré de concentration et de pureté plus ou moins grand."[34]

But if the One is the Self supreme, can It be said to be self-aware, like the reflexive human self? In spite of passages which might suggest this,[35] Plotinus generally denies it explicitly.[36] We need only consider some similar passages immediately relevant to the relation of the One to the human self. Thus, at VI 7, 38,10 ff., Plotinus asks, who will deny that the One has self-awareness, self-knowledge, that it will "be able to say 'I possess Being'"? (This assertion is taken to be the fundamental human one.) But, he answers, it does not exist. Will it not say "I am good"? But that would be, once again, to predicate Being of It. If the Good thinks, it thinks, not Itself, but the Good – it would have an intellection of the Good, and would not be the Good, but a *noêsis*, lines 18-20. Thus, Plotinus concludes, the Good is prior to *noêsis* – that is, to reflexion – it is self-sufficient, and does not need *noêsis* of itself in order to be Good. With self-knowledge, it would be an object, determined (*ti*, 39,1[37]). In fact, it has no more than a simple *epibolê* (39,2 f.) relative to itself – an intuition that does not presuppose the duality of subject and object.

We should like to comment on two aspects of this passage. Firstly, on the notion that self-awareness is the feature of a multiple. In the third theorem on reflexion[38] it was pointed out that this is necessary to the maintenance of the self-identity of intellect. Now intellect is (theorem two) a unity-become-dual, a two-in-one. As V 3 [49], 13,17 says, self-intellection begins when a principle, though "self-sufficient. . . yet needs itself". It is essentially the activity of a multiple: the very fact of saying "I am a being" is indication of a manifold. (This had been asserted in an early part of the treatise, chapter 10,34 ff., where it is stated that the expression "I am this particular thing" implies multiplicity, even if the "particular thing" is included in the self – for even then the expression would be equivalent to "I am what I am," or "I am I," that is, tautological.) If then, says Plotinus, the multiple – for example, the human self – turns towards itself as a simple being, it misses both itself and Being. Now Plotinus would seem here to deny an ultimate simplicity of the self: true, it is of union with *Being* that he momentarily speaks. But the warning here issued is akin to that of II 9, 9,51, "to exalt ourselves above *nous* is to fall from it."[39] The question inevitably arises: if the One as a Self was said[40] to be an absolute of which the human self is a "likeness", and is nonetheless non-reflexive,[41] how can we describe the essentially reflexive self, the manifold, from descriptions of It?

It may be rash to try to answer this question. In the first place, a reminder. At the beginning of this chapter it was pointed out that the analysis of *unio* after the event tended to produce a false knowledge of what is, ultimately, not analysable. Nonetheless, it was later asserted[42] that the self – of which one need not be aware in the moment of *unio* – is a reality, and does not "vanish" in that moment (otherwise there would be no experience): thus, it can, in a sense, be investigated as to its nature in that moment. So we may be justified in attempting to describe it from a description of One as Self – bearing in mind the exceptional, momentary transformation of the self which is in question.

Such an attempt is the second comment we should like to make on VI 7, 38,10-39,1 ff.[43] It concerns the "simple intuitive approach (*epibolê*) to Itself" (39,1) attributed to the One. It can only be an activity of the One, for "What can that which grasps Itself be, other than Itself?" Now we recall that at III 8, 9,20 ff. it was asked, by what "direct intuition (*epibolê*) we can know the One, and the answer given was, by means of that which is like It in ourselves, by abandoning *nous*, the manifold which says "I am". Now the term *epibolê* here used[44] has been admirably analysed by Rist,[45] who draws our attention to the technical use of the term in Epicureanism.[46] Rist rightly sees *epibolê* "as a comprehensive (*athroas*, Diog. Laert. 10,35) view of the data provided by the senses or the mind. . . not a grasping of new external data but a casting back of the mind on itself and on

whatever impressions it has."[47] Rist observes that, while the Plotinian process is different from Epicurean "sensationalism", it nonetheless resembles this in its comprehensive, self-reflexive nature. We should like to add that, in Plotinus, it is also essentially an intuitive act, hardly analysable in rational terms. And bringing our two passages, III 8, 9 and VI 7, 38, together, we should like to suggest the following interpretation: on the basis of the above[48] justified description of the self from that of the One as Self, can we not conclude that the relation of the human subject ("no longer really *nous*") to itself ("by virtue of that in ourselves which is like it") in *unio* is analogous to the "intuitive approach to Itself" of the One asserted at VI 7, 39,1 f.? The term *epibolê* links the two passages: both seem to corroborate the assertions that, on the one hand, the One is a Self, and, on the other, that, of the faculty experiencing *unio*, we can say no more than that it is – "the self".

Notes to Introduction

1. On the originality of the concept cf. J. Stenzel, "Metaphysik des Altertums", *Handbuch der Philosophie*, 1. Abt. (Munich 1934), p. 56.

2. E. Bréhier, *La Philosophie de Plotin*, p. 68.

3. J. Trouillard, *La Purification Plotinienne*, pp. 26f.

4. R. Harder, *Plotin* (Auswahl), p. 19 (=*Kleine Schriften*, p. 269).

5. E.R. Dodds, *Sources*, pp. 385 f.; cf. also H.-R. Schwyzer's remarks, *ibid.*, p. 390. Dodds repeats his comments in "Tradition and Personal Achievement in the Philosophy of Plotinus", *Journal of Roman Studies* 50 (1960), 6.

6. W. Himmerich, *Eudaimonia*, pp. 92-100.

7. W. Himmerich, "Platonische Tradition in didaktischer Reflexion: Plotin-Comenius-Scheler", *Parusia, Festgabe für Johannes Hirschberger*, p. 495.

8. Other scholars have recognized the importance of the concept, e.g. P. Hadot, *Plotin ou la Simplicité du Regard* (Paris 1963), pp. 23-39; E. von Ivánka, *Plato Christianus. Uebernahme und Umgestaltung des Platonismus durch die Väter* (Einsiedeln 1964), pp. 84 f.; E.W. Warren, "Consciousness in Plotinus", *Phronesis* 9 (1964), 83-97, esp. 92-97; H.J. Blumenthal, "Did Plotinus Believe in Ideas of Individuals?", *Phronesis* 11 (1966), 61-80, esp. 61; A.H. Armstrong, *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, p. 225; J.M. Rist, "Integration and the Undescended Soul in Plotinus", *American Journal of Philology* 88 (1967), 410-422; P.S. Mamo, "Forms of Individuals in the Enneads", *Phronesis* 14 (1969), 77-96, esp. 77-79. But no attempt has been made to study the concept exhaustively.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Cf. e.g. V 3, 5.41.

2. ὁ δὲ μαυων εαυτὸν εἰδήσει καὶ ὁπόθεν, VI 9, 7,33; cf. V 3, 7,1ff.

3. εἰς ἑαυτὸν γὰρ ἐπιστρέφων εἰς ἀρχὴν ἐπιστρέφει, VI 9, 2,35.

4. Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 24,5ff.

5. *Ibid.*, 24,15.

6. Note *ad loc.* in *Plotinus Schriften* Vc, p. 122.

7. R.A. Markus in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, p. 344: he quotes Augustine's reference, *De*

Civitate Dei, XIX 1,2, to Varro's distinction of 288 philosophies on the basis of their different answers to the question "How can one attain happiness?"

8. Cf. also IV 7, 1,21.

9. Cf. Nemesius, *De Natura Hominis* (ed. C.F. Matthaei, Halle, 1802), p. 37.

10. Cf. line 2 of the same chapter.

11. Cf. VI 4, 14,29; IV 3, 25,38; IV 4, 18,21, etc.

12. Here the "composite" in question is that of body used by soul: The Platonic definition, according to Plotinus! It will presently be suggested (p.35) that Plotinus has refined the notion of definition, thanks to Aristotle's and his own investigations. Nonetheless, we must bear in mind that in the present passage man in the realm of sense is under discussion; the definition of the *Alcibiades* remains in a sense valid for man in the intelligible realm, cf. VI 7, 5,23ff.

13. Cf. IV 4, 18,20; 20,15.

14. 133c, καί τις εἰς τοῦτο βλέπων καὶ πᾶν τὸ θεῖον γνούς, θεόν τε καὶ φρόνησιν, οὕτω καὶ ἑαυτὸν ἂν γνοίη μάλιστα.

15. p. 9.

16. *Plotins Schriften*, Vb, pp. 368f.

17. III, 556–583 Wachsmuth-Hense.

18. No. 7, 557,12—Ἡράκλειτος νέος ὢν πάντων γέγονε σοφώτερος, ὅτι ᾔδει ἑαυτὸν μηδὲν εἰδότα. Cf. gnomol. Vat. 310.

19. *Apology*, 21a ff.

20. ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωυτόν, Plutarch *adv. Colot.* 20, 1118c (= DK 101).

21. Cf. another Heraclitus fragment, DK 116.

22. G.S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge 1957), p. 213.

23. D.L. IX, 5 ἤκουσέ τε οὐδενός, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἔφη διζήσασθαι καὶ μαθεῖν πάντα παρ' ἑαυτοῦ.

24. 28, ἐπιτυγχάνοντες ὧν πράττουσιν, εὔδοξοί τε καὶ τίμιοι γίγνονται.

25. H. Maier, *Sokrates*, (Tübingen 1913), p. 82.

26. Cf. Xenophon *Mem.* IV, ii, 24 σχολῇ γὰρ ἂν ἄλλο τι ᾔδειν, εἴ γε μηδ' ἐμαυτὸν ἐγίγνωσκον with *Phaedr.* 229e5 οὐ δύναμαί πω κατὰ τὸ

Δελφικὸν γράμμα γνῶναι ἐμαυτόν· γελοῖον δή μοι φαίνεται τοῦτο ἔτι ἀγνοοῦντα τὰ ἀλλότρια σκοπεῖν.

27. λατρεία, *Apology*, 23c1.

28. Cf. *Phaed.* 85b ὁμόδουλός τε εἶναι τῶν κύκνων καὶ ἱερὸς τοῦ.. θεοῦ.

29. Aristotle. Π. φιλοσοφίας. frag. 1, Ross, καὶ τῶν ἐν Δελφοῖς γραμμάτων ἐδόκει τὸ γνῶθι σαυτόν, ὃ δὴ καὶ Σωκράτει ⟨τῆς⟩ ἀπορίας καὶ ζητήσεως ταύτης ἀρχὴν ἐνέδωκεν. Maier (see note 25 above) says that the Xenophon passage may have been the source of Aristotle's words: the remark that the *aporia* of the fragment is based on Xenophon 23 and 30 (beginning), and that *Zêtêsis* is based on 24 ff. in its entirety, is, however, somewhat over-ingenious.

30. W. Jaeger, *Aristotle*, Fundamentals of the History of his Development, trans. by R. Robinson, 2nd edn. (Oxford 1948), p. 130.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

32. *Charmides* 164d ff.—164e7 τὸ γὰρ Γνῶθι σαυτόν καὶ τὸ Σωφρόνει ἔστιν μὲν ταὐτόν.

33. *Phileb.* 48c ff.

34. *Rep.* 589a7 ὁ ἐντὸς ἄνθρωπος cf. *Rep.* 443d1 ὡς ἀληθῶς περὶ ἑαυτόν, as construed by Adam (see note *ad loc.* in *The Republic of Plato*, text and commentary by J. Adam, with a new introduction by D. A. Rees, 2 vols. [Cambridge 1963])—on Dirlmeier's theory that this is the source of an Aristotelian phrase describing the self, see below note 45.

35. *Phaed.* 115 cd οὗτος Σωκράτης ὁ νυνὶ διαλεγόμενος.

36. pp. 9-11.

37. Frag. 3 Ross.

38. *Aristotle*, pp. 129 f.

39. Cf. Cicero *Leg.* I, 22,58; *Fin.* V, 16,44.

40. Cf. frag. 8 Ross.

41. Frag. 6 Ross.

42. *Eth. Nic.* 1166a16 and 1168b35.

43. F. Dirlmeier, *Nikomachische Ethik* Aristoteles, Werke in deutscher Uebersetzung, Band 6 (Berlin 1956), *ad loc.*

44. J. Burnet, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, text and commentary (London 1900).

45. In addition, Dirlmeier points out that the origin of Aristotle's ὅπερ ἕκαστος ἐστίν may be the Platonic phrase ὡς ἀληθῶς περὶ ἑαυτόν, *Rep.* 443d 1 (see above note 34). Likewise, the phrases λέγεται, ὡς, οὐκ ἄδηλον, at 1168b34 and 1169a2 would indicate that the thought is inherited, most likely from Plato.

46. I. Bywater, *Journal of Philology* 2 (1869), 55 ff.

47. Cf. *Aristotle*, pp. 66f., for the passage under discussion.

48. For another passage with the same idea and terminology, see *Eth. Nic.* 1178a2 δόξειε δ' ἂν καὶ εἶναι ἕκαστος τοῦτο, εἴπερ τὸ κύριον καὶ ἄμεινον, 6 τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ δὴ ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος, εἴπερ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἄνθρωπος. For μάλιστα see the *Protrepticus* passage, p. 14.

49. *Met.* 1037a5 and 1043a34 ff.

50. I.e., according to form, to matter or to a combination of both, cf. *De An.* 403b3 ff; *Phys.* 200a24 ff; *De Part An.* 645a33. 5a33.

51. The passages from *Eth. Nic.* and *Met.* were mentioned by Theiler, *Sources*, p. 448, as examples of Aristotle's defining the self by its dominant part; J.M. Rist, *Plotinus*, pp. 86 f., compares Plot. III 4, 3,22 ἐσμὲν ἕκαστος κόσμος νοητός.

52. SVF I 538 καὶ ἄνθρωπον ἐκάλει μόνην τὴν ψυχήν.

53. O. Gigon, *Grundprobleme der antiken Philosophie* (Berne 1959), p. 241.

54. *Somn. Scip.* 26.

55. *Tusc. Disp.* I, 52.

56. *Phaedr.* 245c ff.

57. Cf. *Plotins Schriften*, Vb, pp. 368 f.

58. Cf. also Marc. Aurel. 7, 16, 3 and 5, 26. For the attribution of the thought to Poseidonius see Theiler's notes in the Artemis edition of Marcus Aurelius on these passages. Of special importance is Plutarch, *Fac. Lun.* 945a: on it, see K. Reinhardt, RE XXII, 782 ff. (art. "Pos.").

59. *De An.* p. 1, 3 ff. Brun.

60. The first factor has so far escaped comment. On the second, cf. Bréhier *Ennéades*, tome IV, p. 183; P. Henry, *Sources*, p. 448.

61. Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 14, 13.

62. See e.g. A.H. Armstrong, *Sources*, pp. 392 ff.; P. Henry, *ibid.*, pp. 429 ff.; P. Merlan, *Monopsychism*; F.P. Hager; "Die Aristotelesinterpretation des Alexander von Aphrodisias und die Aristoteleskritik Plotins bezüglich die Lehre vom Geist", *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 46 (1964), 174-187.

63. On this work of Porphyry's cf. R. Beutler, RE XXII, 291, 7 ff.; W. Theiler, *Porphyrios und Augustin*, pp. 48 ff. (= *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus*, pp. 220 ff.).

64. III 579-583 Wachsmuth-Hense.

65. p. 14.

66. For this idea in Plotinus, see pp. 30, 43.

67. A.-J. Festugière, "L'ordre de lecture des dialogues de Platon au Ve/VIe siècles", *Museum Helveticum* 26 (1969), 285 f., n. 27, goes so far as to suggest that in *Περὶ τοῦ γνῶθι σαυτόν* Porphyry may have quoted the *Alcibiades* and recommended it as a book for beginners in philosophy. We have no evidence for this, but Porphyry's choice of the Plotinus treatise closest in purpose to the *Alcibiades* as the introduction to the Enneads would indicate his sensitivity to the propaedeutic powers of that dialogue. Our arguments in the preceding pages would lend substance to Festugière's suggestion.

68. The evidence is now conveniently assembled by Festugière in the article mentioned in the previous note.

69. L.G. Westerink, ed., *Proclus Diadochus: Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato*, critical text and indices (Amsterdam 1954).

70. *Phaedr.* 229e.

71. P. 9.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. P.P. Matter, *Zum Einfluss des Platonischen "Timaios" auf das Denken Plotins*, Berner Diss. (Winterthur 1964), p. 16.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-45, 79-96.

4. Cf. M. Wundt, *Plotin* I, p. 24, "Die Lehre Plotins unterliegt keiner eigentlichen Aenderung, es tritt nur eine merkliche Verschiebung der Akzente ein." This sentence is quoted by H.-R. Schwyzer in RE XXI, 548,10 (Art. "Plotinos").

5. The aptness of "reason" (*logizesthai* = discursive reasoning) as characteristic of the self will later become apparent, cf. pp. 40 ff.

6. The distinction is already made in the "astrological" treatise, II 3 [52], 13.

7. Cf. note *ad loc.* in *Plotinus Schriften*, 1b, p. 387.

8. Cf. pseudo-Plat. *Alcibiades I* 129 b-e.

9. 24 ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτός: for translation of *autos* see p. 89.

10. Cf. IV 4, 18,10 ff.; V 3, 3; I 1, 10.

11. Cf. *Rep.* 617 e. •

12. Cf. *Rep.* 617 a.

13. ὁρμῇ οἰκείᾳ, 6,55.

14. W. Himmerich, *Parusia* (Festgabe Hirschberger), p. 495. Cf. the important discussion on the self in the same author's *Eudaimonia*, pp. 92-100, especially p. 95. See also p.5 of this work.

15. Himmerich, *Parusia*, p. 495.

16. Cf. IV 9 [8]; VI 4 [22], 4,34 ff.; 14,1 ff. See P. Merlan, *Monopsychism*, pp. 53 ff., who links it with the theory of the unicity of intelligence.

17. IV 3, 8,12. This object of vision is equivalent to the soul's *daimôn* in III 4. Cf. VI 7, 6,17.

18. Translating with Harder; cf. Theiler's note *ad loc.*, *Plotins Schriften*, II b, p. 410.

19. IV 8, 4,32. See above p. 22.

20. Note *ad loc.* in *Plotinus Schriften*, II b. p. 501. It refers to the Cosmic Soul, which it was the purpose of chapters 1-8 of the treatise to distinguish from the human soul.

21. Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* XI 602; 617 ff.

22. Plotinus is thinking of *Odyssey* XI 405 ff., as Theiler, *Plotins Schriften*, II b, p. 502, has pointed out.

23. E. Bréhier, *La Philosophie de Plotin*, p. 73.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

25. Lines 57 f: –cf. Theiler's note *ad loc.*, *Plotins Schriften*, V b, p. 353.

26. That the contents are not unrelated is shown by an interesting minor problem, posed by III 4, and by the theory of transmigration in general, and resolved partly in IV 3. In the former, it is a question of the reincarnation of the "self" in subsequent lives, human or otherwise. The problem is: what of the personal traits, the character acquired in the earlier life? Does it survive, or is it erased, only the dominant (be it logical, sensitive or vegetative) psychic phase surviving, depersonalized, in a new incarnation? The problem is acute only in cases of human re-embodiment. Now in IV 3, 27,15 ff. Plotinus mentions that upon the

death of a being whose soul is still "burdened", memories of earlier lives will reappear, and, if there is to be a succession of re-embodiments, there will be continued memories of former existences. Yet here, too, as in the case of the higher soul's selectivity (see p. 27),there will be a dismissal of the more recent and trivial memories. Thus personality survives, in this limited sense, several transmigrations.

27. Elsewhere called the "living body": in chapter 20,15 we learn that it is the lowest soul, namely nature (*physis*, cf. II 3, 9,21), that supplies this shadow or imprint. For "modified body" cf. I 1[53], 4,24 ff., where it is defined in terms of Aristotle's description of the soul at *De An.* 412a27.

28. Cf. *Eth. Nic.* 1178a2 f. For Aristotle's definitions of the self, see above pp. 14 ff.

29. See above p. 21.

30. I.e. at I 1, 4,24. cf. above n. 27.

31. Cf. above p. 22.

32. Cf. III 6 [26].

33. *ἔνδειαν*: Theiler's reading for *ἀλγηδόνα*, which, as he observes, has crept into the text from the following chapter 19,1 f.; cf. *Eth. Nic.* 1173b7.

34. See pp. 41 ff.

35. Himmerich, *Parusia* (Festgabe Hirschberger), p. 495.

36. On the mid-phase of the soul's life, cf. V 2 [11], 2,21 ff.

37. It is, indeed, all things, cf. III 4, 3,21 ff.; IV 3, 8,12. See above p. 24.

38. A.H. Armstrong *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, p.225.

39. Cf. V 3 [49], 3,34-39.

40. Cf. chapter 15,2 τὸ μὲν ξύμπαν ὂν τὸ ἀληθινὸν ἐκεῖνο καὶ ὂν εἶναι καὶ νοῦν καὶ ζῷον τέλειον εἶναι, cf. chapter 8,17 ff. On unity and gradation of ὄν, νοῦς and τὸ ζῷον see P. Hadot *Sources*, pp. 107 ff,

41. For text see *Plotins Schriften*, III: 11, καὶ ᾗ ζῷον ⟨τὸ πᾶν⟩, παντελές ἐστιν ἐκεῖνο· καὶ γὰρ καὶ ὁ ἐνταῦθα ἄνθρωπος [ᾗ ζῷον τὸ πᾶν] μέρος αὐτοῦ.

42. Of VI 7 Theiler, at *Plotins Schriften*, III b, p. 475, has said that it is "eine Generalrepitition des plotinischen Systems."

43. A remark made, in slightly different terms, by E. Bréhier, in the Budé *Plotin* VI/2, p. 47 (notice to VI 7).

44. *Plato's Theory of Knowledge: The Theaetetus and The Sophist of Plato*, translated with a running commentary by F.M. Cornford (London 1935), p. 8.

45. Albinus, *Didasc.* 163,24 ff. Hermann.

46. Source of the thought is the teaching of Poseidonius on *heimarmenê;* cf. Theiler, *Vorbereitung*, pp. 95 f.

47. One must recall the Plotinian insistence on the appropriateness of identifying "the beautiful" with real Being, cf. V 8, 9,37 ff.

48. J. Trouillard, *La Purification Plotinienne*, p. 15.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

50. Pp. 31 f.

51. See above p. 20.

52. Even though the consistency of VI 6 [34] with VI 7 [38] as against earlier treatises might support the theory of development.

53. See above pp. 29 f. It is subsequently rehabilitated at chapter 5,23 ff. – in a qualified sense – for man in the transcendent, somewhat forcibly, as Theiler has remarked, *Vorbereitung*, p. 67, n. 3.

54. Cf. II 7, 3,13 ff.

55. Theiler, *Vorbereitung*, pp. 66 f.

56. Cf. VI 3, 15,28 ff., discussed, p. 60.

57. J.M. Rist, *Plotinus*, pp. 84-102.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

59. *Ibid.*

60. Chapter 7, 29 ff., ὥστε εἶναι τὰς αἰσθήσεις ταύτας ἀμυδρὰς νοήσεις, τὰς δὲ ἐκεῖ νοήσεις ἐναργεῖς αἰσθήσεις.

61. See above p. 35.

62. *Plotinus*, pp. 96 f.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

64. See above p. 22.

65. Cf. IV 3, 8,12: see above pp. 24 f.

66. See above p. 37.

67. As Theiler, in *Plotins Schriften*, III b, p. 489, remarks, quoting VI 3, 7,22 in comparison.

68. IV 4, 33,35: the cause is the forming All – precisely by being All, *ibid.*, 36 f.

69. Cf. Theiler, *Vorbereitung*, pp. 90 ff.

70. J. Trouillard, *La Purification Plotinienne*, p. 66.

71. Cf. IV 4, 20,15.

72. *Ibid.*, chapter 18, 7.

73. Cf. IV 4, 18,11, where it becomes apparent that the present context adds nothing substantially new.

74. Above p. 29.

75. Pp. 30 f.

76. Cf. IV 3, 27, 7 f., and above pp. 26 ff.

77. Above p. 40.

78. Above pp. 24 f., 37.

79. For a discussion of this expression, see the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

80. V 3,3,34, ἢ αὐτοὶ μὲν οἱ λογιζόμενοι καὶ νοοῦμεν τὰ ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ νοήματα αὐτοί· τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμεῖς.

81. Cf. IV 7, 1,22; IV 4, 18,14.

82. As Theiler, *Plotins Schriften*, V b, p. 374, has commented, the passage is problematic. Our interpretation agrees with his insofar as lines 1-4 seem to refer to the *dianoêtikon*, and lines 7-14 to the double self-knowledge of the *dianoêtikon* and *nous*: but we do not understand 4-7 to refer exclusively to *nous*, precisely because "the other things" (5) indicate *external* knowledge, inconsistent with the pure self-knowledge of *nous*. But the passage remains unclear. In 1-4, for example, why are two aspects of the *dianoêtikon's* relationship distinguished, when these are shown, in chapter 3,8 ff., to be one?

83. *Tim.* 69c ff.

84. See above p. 43; cf. also "the veritable man", I 1, 7,20.

85. Cf. *Rep.* 617e.

86. Cf. "modified body", IV 4, 18,20; 20,15.

87. Cf. IV 4, 18,11, etc.

88. See above pp. 39 f.

89. Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 6,16.

90. Cf. IV 3, 27.

91. Cf. IV 4, 18; II 3, 9, etc.

92. Cf. V 3, 3,11.

93. See above pp. 24 f.

94. Cf. V 3, 2.

95. Cf. III 6, 1-5.

96. See above p. 46.

97. J. Trouillard, *La Purification Plotinienne*, p. 27.

98. VI 5, 2,24: cf. Bréhier's note in the Budé edition, *ad loc.* He refers to Arist. *An. Post.* I, chapters 9 and 10.

99. See above pp. 30 f., p. 41.

100. Cf. IV 8, 8,6 ff.

101. P.O. Kristeller, *Der Begriff der Seele in der Ethik des Plotin*. See especially his delineation of the "aktuelle Seite", i.e. "die auf der innerlich erfahrenen Steigerung des Bewusstseins (beruht)", *ibid.*, p. 6. This latter, he maintains, stands outside the scope of objective investigation, *ibid.*, p. 13.

102. K.-H. Volkmann-Schluck, *Plotin als Interpret der Ontologie Platos*, pp. 148 f.

103. W. Himmerich, *Eudaimonia*, pp. 96 f.

104. Cf. V 3, 6,23 ff. On the relation of self to consciousness see E.W. Warren, "Consciousness in Plotinus", *Phronesis* 9 (1964), 83-97, esp. 92-97.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Above p. 21.

2. Subsequently defined as *akin* to the divine (*διὰ συγγένειαν*, 19); cf. V3, 8,23 ff., esp. 44., and comment pp. 57 f.

3. Chapter 8,46; cf. chapter 9,1 ff.

4. Proclus gives support to the notion that the term *homoousion* is not used fortuitously here. At *In Tim.* III 245.21-246.28 he speaks against the theory that soul is *homoousion* with the Higher, basing himself on an interpretation of *Tim.*41d, and speaking of *ousiôdeis diaphorai* of souls, the one sovereign, the others determined, all existing

in a hierarchy from the divine to the human. Plotinus is mentioned by name as holding the mistaken view that souls are differentiated "by means of their acts (*energeiai*) alone" (245.26). Iamblichus (*apud* Stob. I, 372.23 W.-H.) reports on the same teaching as being held by Plotinus: for this view of Plotinus', cf. VI 7, 6,17, "each individual *is* that by which he acts" (see above p. 37). Furthermore, Proclus *In Tim.* III 231.5 objects to those "Platonists" who declare our soul to be ἰσοστάσιον and ὁμοούσιον ταῖς θείαις ψυχαῖς (245.20 ἰσάξιον), and say that it is αὐτὸν ... τὸν νοῦν καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ νοητὸν καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἕν—its fall into the realm of becoming belies these assertions, says Proclus. (These objections are of course based on Proclus' rejection of Plotinus' theory of the "undescended" part of the human soul; cf. *In Tim.* III 333.28; El. *Th.* prop. 211, and E.R. Dodds's note *ad loc.* in his *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*.)

5. See above p. 21.

6. For κόσμος νοητός cf. III 4, 3,21 ff. At the end of the quotation truth is attributed to the *noêta* insofar as they are "illuminated" by the Good: cf. VI 7, 22,7 ff. – the soul is not moved towards *nous*, in spite of the latter's beauty for this remains "supine" until "it take the light of the Good" and be permeated by a "glow from the divine". The One provides the necessary "grace" (*charis*), 7 and 24, which assures the beauty of *nous*.

7. See pp. 70 ff.

8. We can speak of "self" here because the term "soul" in IV 7 – as in III 4 – means essentially "self", as our investigation of these treatises in chapter 2 has shown.

9. *Theaet.* 176b.

10. R. Harder, *Ueber Ciceros Somnium Scipionis*, p. 128, n.2 (= *Kleine Schriften*, p. 369, n.55).

11. *Plotins Schriften* Ib, p. 560.

12. *Symp.* 202e.

13. Cf. VI 4, 14,23, "other man"; cf. also "twofold" in connection with "the composite" there, line 29.

14. See above pp. 42 f.

15. See above pp. 32 ff.

16. There is no need, given the sense of I 2, 6,1 ff. and VI 4, 14,25, to doubt that the self here referred to is the truest self of the *individual* rather than the Idea of Man.

17. See above pp. 35 ff.

18. That is, to τὸ ἀνθρώπῳ εἶναι opposed to ἄνθρωπον εἶναι, cf. V 9 [5], 13; VI 8 [39], 14; VI 3 [44], 9.

19. P. 53.

20. See above p. 25.

21. Cf. *Alcib*. 133c.

22. It is possible to see in the terms *su* and *sauton* designations of the notion of self which parallel *hêmeis* and *autos/hauton*. The influence of the Delphic formula is apparent here. Thus, in Porphyry's work "On 'Know Thyself'" (see above pp. 17 f.) the formula has clearly become the equivalent of *self*-knowledge.

23. Cf. the attempt of E. Bréhier, *La Philosophie de Plotin*, pp. 107-133.

24. For a judicious, if short contemporary view on oriental influences in Plotinus, see A.H. Armstrong in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 200 f., especially p. 201, n. 1.

25. This is the conclusion of J.M. Rist in his recent book *Plotinus*, chapter 16, "Mysticism" (pp.213-230). Rist convincingly shows, by dealing with an abundance of Plotinus texts, that the latter's mysticism is of the "theistic" type (pp. 214, 228), in R.C. Zaehner's sense of this term (as Dodds, *Sources*, p. 22, n. 2 had already suggested).

26. M. de Gandillac, *La Sagesse de Plotin*, pp. 182 ff.

27. *Ibid*., p. 183.

28. For a formulation of this paradox, cf. V 9, 10,10 ff.

29. Pp. 61 f.

30. The paradox noted above, p. 64 (See note 28).

31. P. 62.

32. See p. 57.

33. Cf. V 3, 13,17 ff.

34. P. 62.

35. *Plotins Schriften* Vb, pp. 351 f.

36. P. 65.

37. Elsewhere adduced for the same purpose at e.g. IV 9, 5,7 f. and V 9, 6,1 ff. Cf. there line 3 πάντα δὲ ὁμοῦ ἐκεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν ἧττον διακεκριμένα (of νοῦς).

38. For idea of inclusion cf. also V 9, 6,16.

39. P. 64.

40. See above pp. 63 f.

41. See above p. 58.

42. See above p. 65; cf. also I 4, 9,27 ff.

43. Cf. here line 6 ἐν ψυχῇ τῇ πρώτῃ with e.g. V 1, 10,13, τὸ δὴ λογιζόμενον ... (17) ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ νοητῷ.

44. In the course of this section the term "reflexion" indicates the self-knowledge particular to *nous*.

45. Above pp. 7, 63 f.

46. The fact that chronology is vital to our examination of texts attributing reflexion to the One is another matter: there it is the nature of the One, and not of reflexion as such, that is in question.

47. *Sources*, p. 387.

48. O. Becker, *Plotin und das Problem der geistigen Aneignung*, p. 27. Becker had, in fact, read *αὑτό* for *αὐτό* in the phrase in question. H.-R. Schwyzer, *Gnomon* 32 (1960) 41 defends the reading *αὑτό*, and refers to the comment of G. Huber, *Das Sein und das Absolute*, (Basle 1955), p. 69, n. 11, where its significance for Plotinus' conception of the One is stressed. Cf. also the remarks of W. Beierwaltes, *Plotin Ueber Ewigkeit und Zeit*, p. 15, n. 5, "Gleichwohl darf . . . *nicht αὑτό* gelesen werden, um das Eine nicht als selbstbezüglich, d.h. sich selbst reflektierend erscheinen zu lassen, wodurch es seine Einheit aufhöbe." These remarks are, in view of Beierwaltes' attempt to have the One as subject of the phrase, somewhat over-subtle.

49. Cf. H.J. Krämer, *Ursprung der Geistmetaphysik*, p. 398, n. 76.

50. K.-H. Volkmann-Schluck, *Plotin als Interpret*, p. 122.

51. For a convenient collection of texts see Schwyzer, *Sources* p. 374. But cf. also n. 63 below.

52. Becker, *Plotin*, p.31.

53. *Sources*, pp. 374 ff. and 389.

54. *Sources*, p. 382.

55. Cf. also V 4, 2,4 ff.

56. For a thorough and convincing demonstration of this, cf. Krämer, *Geistmetaphysik*, pp. 312 ff., who relates it to a philosophy of number inherent in the teaching, originally Pythagorean and introduced into the Academy by Xenocrates – following Plato's lecture "On The

Good" – namely, the teaching on the "One and the Unlimited Dyad".

57. Worthy of mention is the attempt of W. Beierwaltes, *Plotin Ueber Ewigkeit und Zeit*, p. 14, to give a philosophical interpretation of the passage, based upon his rendering of the phrase with the One as subject. He falls into the snare, however, of contradicting himself, an inevitable outcome when one must try to avoid attributing reflexion to the One while admitting its conversion. Thus he calls the One "beziehungslos", yet must speak of its "Selbstreflexion". What he calls "Reflexion des EINEN im ANDEREN", in an attempt to relate One and *nous* fundamentally, has been more happily formulated by Volkmann-Schluck: "Der Nous ist also nicht ein von dem Einen verschiedenes Seiendes, sondern es selbst, wie es denkbar wird, d.h. aber schon als Vielheit," *Plotin als Interpret*, p. 123. Here, in contrast to Beierwaltes, the *initiative* of reflexion is attributed to *nous*.

58. See pp. 63 f.

59. See p. 7.

60. Discussed above, pp. 52 f.

61. The probable wording of Heraclitus, given by Plutarch, *adv. Colot.* 20, 1118c (= Fr. B 101 DK) is: *ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωυτόν*. See above p. 12 (and n. 20 to chapter 1).

62. Harder, *Plotins Schriften*, Ib, p. 533, says, "die Formulierung ist so knapp, dass keine Sicherheit über den Sinn zu gewinnen ist."

63. As E.R. Dodds has pointed out, Plotinus here "toys with the opinion held by Numenius (*ap.* Euseb. *Praep. Ev.* XI, 18, 20) . . . that there is a higher *nous* which is *akinêtos* and a lower *nous* which moves" (Proclus, *Elements* p. 207), adding that he later explicitly rejects this opinion, at II 9 [33], 1,26 ff. There *nous* is paradoxically described, 29, as ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως ἐνεργείᾳ κείμενος ἑστώσῃ—a phrase that expresses the notion of its simultaneous *stability* and *movement*. (Dodds discusses the matter again in *Sources*, pp. 19 ff.) Plotinus returns to the notion again at V 3 [49], 7,13 ff., where he explains that νῷ ἡσυχία οὐ νοῦ ἐστιν ἔκστασις, ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἡσυχία τοῦ νοῦ σχολὴν ἄγουσα ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἐνέργεια. Here is a new significance of ἡσυχία, equated, as in the last passage, with *energeia*, but meaning not merely "stability" but also "abstention from the alien", complete interiority – the guarantee, in turn, of the characteristic stability of *nous*. The early "Numenian" assumption of two "intelligences", the higher unmoved, is not unrelated to the above-mentioned reflexion or self-awareness of the One (see above pp. 71 f.), as J.M. Rist, *Plotinus*, pp. 42 ff., has pointed out. Speaking of V 4 [7], 2,17 ff. καὶ ἡ κατανόησις αὐτοῦ αὐτὸ, οἱονεὶ συναισθήσει οὖσα ἐν στάσει ἀιδίῳ κτλ. Rist compares the phrase ἐν στάσει ἀιδίῳ with the "Numenian" III 9, 1,16, and also the latter passage in II 9. He sees Plotinus using in our present phrase (in an early treatise) what remains of the idea of a double *nous*, "the static and higher being also a *noêton*" – cf. chapter 2,4, etc. In the word *katanoêsis* Rist sees an inaccuracy of terminology: in III 9, 9,22 *katanoêsis* is denied to the One. We believe that the latter passage is relatively late, *pace* Rist, who runs into difficulties by assuming it to be "Numenian" and so – implicitly – early. But Rist's connection of the problems of the One's self-awareness and the Numenian double *nous* clarifies the whole problem of the early phase of Plotinus' (as yet ambiguous) teaching on the One's transcendence.

64. Theiler's emendation of lines 4 f.—proposed to the present writer in the course of a conversation on the passage—καὶ οὐσία[ς] δὲ ἡ νοήσις καὶ ζωὴ[ς] νοήσις, would seem to clarify this otherwise most obscure phrase. Similarly, a further suggested emendation of Theiler's would solve another *aporia* in lines 8 f. As the passage stands, ἡ δὲ νοήσις ἡ αὐτῶν τὴν εἰκόνα φέρει, Plotinus would seem to be contradicting his usual insistence on the integral nature of self-knowledge, which is not of any εἰκών or τύπος, of any external image, but, by definition, of the very self, cf. e.g. V 3, 5, 23 ff; V 8, 10,35 ff. Now Theiler suggests ἡ δὲ νοήσις ἡ ἄλλων, which would thus make the phrase refer to normal knowledge of externals, which is contrasted with self-knowledge in the passages quoted. That this knowledge might be said to convey an εἰκών becomes meaningful if we understand it as being an εἰκών of *real* self-knowledge, or of *nous*, cf. V 3, 2,9, where, in addition to the *logizomenon's* (the faculty which knows normally, i.e. external data) working on sense impressions, it is said to receive *typoi* rising from *nous*.

65. Reading ἵνα ᾖ with Theiler at line 54. Henry-Schwyzer's retention of the MSS reading καὶ μὴ ὁμοῦ κτλ. (which they translate *quamquam nec simul nec nostrum id nec simpliciter*) makes the phrase contradict the preceding comment that τὰ ἀληθῆ ὄντως καὶ ἀίδια are not only ἐν τῷ ἁπλῶς but also ἐν ἑκάστῳ, as well as contradict the following ὅθεν καὶ τῶν ἁπλῶν ἡμῖν ὁ ἔρως—all statements which state explicitly that the self contains the real, the authentically existent, and in conscious, i.e. reflexive fashion.

66. See above pp. 22 ff.

67. Cf. VI 7, 6,17.

68. See above p. 73, with cited texts.

69. P. Merlan, *Monopsychism*, p. 82.

70. Alex. Aphrodis. *De An.* 86,17 ff. Bruns.

71. This fact would appear to have been overlooked by P.O. Kristeller, *Der Begriff der Ethik*, p. 69, when he suggests that the

passage means that the self is one with the *absolute* Good.

72. P. 72.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. K. Jaspers, "Das philosophische Grundwissen und unser Seinsbewusstsein", *Universitas* 23 (1968), 231.

2. Cf. VI 9 [9], 9,58 – the self is "light itself, pure. . . ."; V 5 [32], 7,34 – the *nous* does not know whether the light is "from within or without" – in fact, it is (*ibid.*, chapter 8,15) "present before all else".

3. *Plotins Schriften*, I b, p. 381.

4. Cf. Hierocles *In Carm Aur*. v. 1, p. 32.2 Mullach: ἄγαλμα θεῖον τεκταίνειν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχήν.

5. As J.M. Rist, *Plotinus*, p. 195, points out, a passage in Porphyry's *Vita Plotini*, 23,11, "enthroned above *nous* and all the Intellectual-Sphere (*noêton*)", referring to the transcendent God, with whom Plotinus attained union on four occasions, bears a close resemblance to IV 8, 1. Rist assumes, rightly, that Porphyry's words echo those of Plotinus. Lines 9 ff. of the same passage, asserting that Plotinus attained to vision of God by means of intellectual meditations (*tais ennoiais*), need not contradict this possibility: the passage would seem to stress merely the necessary intellectual *propaedeutic* to vision. Hence the reference to the *Symposium*, clearly meaning *Symp*. 210a ff., the ascent *preliminary* to vision of the Beautiful (there, 210d5, *dianoêmata*, in *penultimate* stage of ascent). There is no doubt that in this chapter of the *Vita* Porphyry wishes us to realize how the ultimate end of Plotinus' activity was to *transcend* intellectuality, "for the Term, the one end, of his (Plotinus') life was to become Uniate, to approach the God that transcends all" (15 f.), that God who is "first and all-transcendent" (7): and lines 11 f. put the matter beyond doubt.

6. Cf. chapter 10,9 ff.; 11,5 ὡς ἂν μὴ ἑωραμένον, ἀλλ' ἡνωμένον.

7. *Plotins Schriften* Ib, p. 486.

8. P. 83.

9. Pp. 82 ff.

10. That this lack of awareness need not necessarily lessen the *value* of the experience, cf. I 4, 10,21 ff., IV 4, 4,10 ff.

11. Cf. VI 7, 35,24 on the *nous emphrôn*.

12. See above pp. 83 f.

13. See above p. 84.

14. Cf. VI 7, 32,31 δύναμις οὖν ⟨οὖσα⟩ παντὸς καλοῦ ἄνθος ἐστί, κάλλους καλοποιόν, and I 8, 2,8, again of One, αὐτός τε γὰρ ὑπέρκαλος.

15. Cf. W. Kroll *De oraculis Chaldaicis* (Breslau 1894), 11,1 and n. 1 *ibid.*

16. I.e., by the double usage of *οἷον* in line 30.

17. Cf. R. Harder, "Eine neue Schrift Plotins", *Hermes* 71 (1936), 1-10.

18. On the theological implications of "as it is" and "that it is" cf. Theiler, *Vorbereitung*, pp. 141 ff., esp. p. 143, n. 1.

19. See note 17 above.

20. Already at III 8, 9,31 *nous* was called *amphistomos*.

21. Thus Harder "sie (i.e., soul) wird mit dem Geiste eins" – likewise Cilento. MacKenna renders differently: "the two visions (i.e. that in *nous* and that in soul) become one."

22. See above p. 85.

23. IV 8, 1; VI 9, 11,37 f., etc.

24. *Sources*, p. 448.

25. E.R. Dodds, *Journal of Roman Studies* 50 (1960), 1.

26. *Ibid.*

27. Cf. V 1,8,10 ff.

28. The immediately following circle-centre-radius image corroborates this, cf. VI 9, 8 and 10; VI 5, 5.

29. *Eth. Nic.* 1166a31.

30. Cf. VI 7, 34 and 35 above, pp. 88 ff.

31. E. Bréhier, *La Philosophie de Plotin*, p. 178.

32. P. 61.

33. Bréhier, *La Philosophie de Plotin*, p. 181.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 182. The concept of the One as absolute Subject or self is criticized by Krämer, *Geistmetaphysik*, p. 399, n. 81, who limits the sense of *autos* in the passages from VI 8 under discussion to that of the *metaphysical autonomy* of the One. But that which is absolutely autonomous is absolutely *itself*, purest *self-identity*: by saying no more than this, Bréhier would seem to avoid the anachronism (One as the *Ich* of German Idealism) of which Krämer accuses him. Our argument would tend to reinforce Bréhier's insight.

35. V 1, 7,12; V 4, 2,17. Cf. O. Becker, *Plotin und das Problem der geistigen Aneignung*, p. 31; Schwyzer, *Sources*, pp. 375, 389, and RE XXI, 561.

36. V 3, 13,12; VI 7, 41,22; V 6, 5,3; III 9, 9,13.

37. I.e., dividing the chapters with Theiler (in *Plotins Schriften*) as opposed to Bréhier, where these lines are 38, 25 ff.

38. Above p. 73.

39. See above p. 87.

40. Above p. 91.

41. For an interesting parallel description of matter and the One as non-reflexive, cf. III 6 [26], 15,27: matter cannot say "here am I", that is, it cannot postulate a self which would give it claim to real existence. In fact it is an "utter void" (26), a "something abandoned by all that really is", 29.

42. Above p. 85.

43. See above p. 92. For chapter division, see note 37 above.

44. Cf. also VI 8, 11,23 and III 7, 1,4.

45. J.M. Rist, *Plotinus*, pp. 49 ff.

46. Passages quoted by Rist include Diog. Laert. 10, chapters 31, 35, 38, 50, 51 and 147; Lucretius II 740, 1047, 1080 (*animi iniectus* or *iactus*). On the term in Epicureanism see G. Vlastos, *Gnomon* 27 (1955), 70 f., cited by Rist.

47. Rist, *Plotinus*, p. 50.

48. P. 91.

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II

THE PRESENCE OF THE ONE IN PLOTINUS

In one of the most famous passages of the *Enneads*, IV, 8, 1, 1 ff., Plotinus describes mystical union with the One (1) as a state in which I awaken out of the body 'into myself' (εἰς ἐμαυτόν) and become 'self-centred' (ἐμαυτοῦ... εἴσω). In this state I achieve identity with the divine, 'stationed in it' (ἐν αὐτῷ ἱδρυθείς) and 'stationing myself above everything else (2) that is intelligible' (ὑπὲρ πᾶν τὸ ἄλλο νοητὸν ἐμαυτὸν ἱδρύσας). These phrases give expression to the paradox inherent in Plotinus' account of mystical experience. On the one hand, it is the passive subsumption implied in the words '*stationed* in it'; on the other, it is an active ('*stationing* myself') entry into selfhood. There is no suggestion of loss of identity. On the contrary: the human subject awakens thereby to his true identity. How is this apparent contradiction to be resolved? By what power or faculty can I become one with the One while remaining, or rather becoming, 'myself'?

Plotinus speaks of such a faculty on several occasions (3). At VI 9, 3, 20 ff. we read that one who would see the ἀρχή, the One, must ἐπί τε τὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἀρχὴν ἀναβεβηκέναι καὶ ἓν ἐκ πολλῶν γενέσθαι. It is by means of νοῦς that this is accomplished: χρὴ... (26) καθαρῷ τῷ νῷ τὸ καθαρώτατον θεᾶσθαι καὶ τοῦ νοῦ τῷ πρώτῳ. What is the meaning of 'pure intellect' and 'the summit of intellect'? (4) Plotinus elsewhere (VI 7, 35, 19 ff.) distinguishes

(1) J. M. Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (Cambridge, 1967), p. 195, argues convincingly that Plotinus is speaking in IV 8, 1 of mystical union (and not of identity with divine νοῦς: cfr. J. Trouillard, *La Purification plotinienne* (Paris, 1955), p. 47; R. Harder, *Plotins Schriften* Ib (Hamburg, 1956), p. 443. "Gemeint ist der 'höhere', geistige Weltteil". P. Henry–H.-R. Schwyzer, *Plotini Opera* II (Paris, 1959), p. 224 *ad loc.* are uncertain). Rist adduces the close verbal parallel from Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 23, 11: ὑπὲρ δὲ νοῦν καὶ πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν ἱδρυμένος, which refers unequivocally to union with the transcendent One, and echoes our passage, as well as drawing attention to the versions of the Arabic *Theology of Aristotle* (translated in Henry–Schwyzer II, p. 225), 'above the entire intelligible world', and Ambrose, *de Isaac* 4, 11, 'Ea quae sunt intelligibilia supergressa in eo confirmatur'.

(2) Why 'everything else'? Either the ἄλλο in πᾶν τὸ ἄλλο νοητόν is pleonastic, or (more probably) the One is here regarded as a νοητόν, as in some other early treatises of Plotinus, e.g. V 4, 2, 4.12; V 6, 2, 8.

(3) The passages are assembled by W. Theiler, 'Plotin und die antike Philosophie', *Museum Helveticum*, *1* (1944), 223 f. (= *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus* (Berlin, 1966), pp. 157 f.); Cfr. J. M. Rist, 'Mysticism and Transcendence in Later Neoplatonism', *Hermes*, 92 (1964), 213.

(4) That the faculty is described as νοῦς, 'intellect', may help to explain an otherwise puzzling feature of IV 8,1. There (lines 7 ff.) the descent of the soul from its mystical moment

between two powers of νοῦς, one of contemplating its own contents (ἡ θέα νοῦ ἔμφρονος, 23) [5], and one of grasping intuitively (ἐπιβολῇ τινι, 21) and receiving its transcendent, which he calls νοῦς ἐρῶν, 24. In the latter power Plotinus attempts to specify an instance of νοῦς which is other than its characteristic activity of reflective self-intellection. If man's consubstantiality with the divine [6] is guaranteed by his being νοῦς [7], it is inferred that his most complete identity with the divine – mystical union with the One – is achieved by his highest, 'loving' νοῦς: 'loving', because it is an irrational (ἄφρων, VI, 7, 35, 24) longing for the simplicity (ἅπλωσις καὶ... ἔφεσις, VI 9, 11, 23. Cfr. VI 7, 35, 25: τότε ἐρῶν γίνεται ἁπλωθείς) where 'two become one' [8]. But can one speak of an irrational νοῦς? It quickly becomes apparent that Plotinus finds the notion unsatisfactory, 43: οὐδὲ νοῦς, ὅτι μηδὲ νοεῖ· ὁμοιοῦσθαι γὰρ δεῖ· νοεῖ δὲ οὐδ' ἐκεῖνο [9]. The concept of νοῦς ἐρῶν is in no sense a solution to the problem of the identity of the visionary. If the latter is not 'annihilated' in the moment of vision – and Plotinus explicitly denies that he is [10] – then he must attain to such vision by a power higher even than νοῦς: he must, as Plotinus says elsewhere, be 'no longer really νοῦς' [11].

I have suggested elsewhere [12] that Plotinus' ultimate description of the visionary's identity in this state is that he sees as 'the self' at its highest – the self being that spontaneous, self-determining faculty which accounts for the conscious identity of the human subject at its several possible levels of existence. The self is most clearly observable as personal identity in the historical individual, but an individual self is also posited by Plotinus at the level of intellect, for the latter's duality-in-unity implies self, the thinking subject. It may at first sight seem paradoxical – as was mentioned at the

is described as being a descent εἰς λογισμὸν ἐκ νοῦ. This latter may well be the 'pure' νοῦς which sees the One in VI 9, 3.

(5) Cfr. νοῦς νοῶν, V 5, 10, 9.

(6) Cfr. IV 7, 10, 18 (of the purified soul): ἀνάγκη θεῖον τὸ τοιοῦτον εἶναι, ἅτε θείων μετὸν αὐτῷ διὰ συγγένειαν καὶ τὸ ὁμοούσιον.

(7) Cfr. *ibid.* 32 ff., esp. 35: κόσμον καὶ αὐτὸν νοητὸν καὶ φωτεινὸν γεγενημένον· III 4, 3, 22: ἐσμὲν ἕκαστος κόσμος νοητός.

(8) VI 7, 34, 13: μεταξὺ γὰρ οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἔτι δύο, ἀλλ' ἓν ἄμφω. For a list of similar phrases from VI 9 and elsewhere see RIST, *Plotinus*, p. 226.

(9) For a more detailed analysis of this and subsequent passages in this paper see Chapter IV ('The Self and the One') of my dissertation *Plotinus' Philosophy of the Self*, presented to the University of Berne in November, 1968, and now in preparation as a book at the Irish University Press.

(10) For the passages suggesting that unity—between the soul and God—is achieved 'as far as possible' see R. ARNOU, *Le Désir de Dieu dans la Philosophie de Plotin* (2nd ed. Rome, 1967), pp. 247 ff. The παρουσία (VI 9, 4, 3) of the One does not imply its identity with its subsequents, for, III 8, 9, 39: οὐ γὰρ ἀρχὴ τὰ πάντα, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀρχῆς τὰ πάντα (cfr. V 5, 13, 19).

(11) III 8, 9, 29: δεῖ τὸν νοῦν ...εἰ ἐθέλοι ἐκεῖνο ὁρᾶν, μὴ πάντα νοῦν εἶναι. V 5, 6, 19: ὁ θεάσασθαι θέλων τὸ ἐπέκεινα τοῦ νοητοῦ τὸ νοητὸν πᾶν ἀφεὶς θεάσεται, 8, 22: νῦν δέ, ὅτι ἐστὶ νοῦς, οὕτω βλέπει, ὅτε βλέπει, τῷ ἑαυτοῦ μὴ νῷ.

(12) 'The Self and the One'. See note 9 above.

beginning of this paper – that the self survives at the level of mystical union, but that is the implication, as we have seen, of IV 8, 1, 1 ff. In another passage, VI 9, 11, 35 ff., Plotinus, speaking of union, says that soul, by its nature, can never 'touch utter nothingness' or absolute non-being. The ascending soul (38) ἥξει οὐκ εἰς ἄλλο, ἀλλ' εἰς ἑαυτήν, καὶ οὕτως οὐκ ἐν ἄλλῳ οὖσα ἐν οὐδενί ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ἐν αὑτῇ· τὸ δ' ἐν αὑτῇ μόνῃ καὶ οὐκ ἐν τῷ ὄντι ἐν ἐκείνῳ. The soul which proceeds to itself, and is in itself, is thereby in the Absolute, in a manner that transcends being (and, since νοῦς is being, it transcends νοῦς), 41: γίνεται γὰρ καὶ αὐτός τις οὐκ οὐσία, ἀλλ' ἐπέκεινα οὐσίας ταύτῃ, ᾗ προσομιλεῖ.

Thus, for the soul – or the self – 'beyond being' and in 'converse' with the One, 'in itself' is identical with 'in the One'. Plotinus employs the metaphor of the converging centres of circles to express more fully what he means by this. The natural movement of the soul, he says (VI 9, 8, 1 ff.), is not rectilinear, but circular, around its centre, which is its source. Is the Absolute then the centre, as it were, of the soul? It is more, he suggests: it is 'the centre of all the centres' 19: συνάπτομεν κατὰ τὸ ἑαυτῶν κέντρον τῷ οἷον πάντων κέντρῳ. In the moment of mystical union this 'coincidence' is realized by the self, κἀκείνου γενόμενος ἕν ἐστιν ὥσπερ κέντρῳ κέντρον συνάψας (VI 9, 10, 16). The metaphor suggests an identity (of centres) which does not exclude the individuality of self or soul (the circle radiating from its centre-source). It is, as Rist suggests [13], 'perhaps the most apt description of all' of msystical union, an attempt, indeed, as Plotinus himself reminds us, to describe the indescribable (VI 9, 10, 19–21) – for the One is never experienced objectively (ὡς ἕτερον) but always 'seen only as one with one's self' (ἓν πρὸς ἑαυτόν).

In one sense, all subsequents may be said to inhere 'in the One', their source. As Arnou has pointed out [14], there is a correlation in Plotinus between the terms ἐν ἄλλῳ and ὑπ' ἄλλου, between the idea of immanence and that of source. B is 'in' A, because deriving or 'proceeding' from A, V 5, 9, 1: πᾶν τὸ γενόμενον ὑπ' ἄλλου ἢ ἐν ἐκείνῳ ἐστὶ τῷ πεποιηκότι ἢ ἐν ἄλλῳ, εἴπερ εἴη τι μετὰ τὸ ποιῆσαν αὐτό. Only the One, as ἀρχή... οὐκ ἔχει ἐν ὅτῳ ἄλλῳ. Strictly speaking, as Arnou stresses, the One is not immanent in any subsequent, but all subsequents are immanent in their respective principles, V 5, 9, 31: ψυχὴ μὲν ἐν νῷ, σῶμα δὲ ἐν ψυχῇ, νοῦς δὲ ἐν ἄλλῳ. There are, however, some passages where Plotinus would appear to contradict this, and assert that the One is 'in' us. At V 1, 10, 5 we read that the hypostases exist not merely ἐν τῇ φύσει but χρὴ νομίζειν καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν ταῦτα εἶναι. The term παρ' ἡμῖν here may mean not so much the immanence of the One as its presence, as Rist has suggested [15]. But a later passage in the same trea-

(13) *Plotinus*, p. 223.

(14) *Le Désir de Dieu*, pp. 167 ff.

(15) J. M. RIST, *Eros and Psyche: Studies in Plato, Plotinus and Origen* (Toronto, 1964), pp. 80 f. Cfr. VI 4, 11, 20: ἔστι γὰρ καὶ παρεῖναι χωρὶς ὄν.

tise, chapter 11,5, is more explicit: δεῖ... νοῦν ἐν ἡμῖν εἶναι, εἶναι δὲ καὶ τὴν νοῦ ἀρχὴν καὶ αἰτίαν καὶ θεόν. Similarly, at III 8, 9, 21, 'By what direct intuition (τίνι... ἐπιβολῇ ἀθρόᾳ;) can that which transcends the intellectual order be grasped?' The answer is: τῷ ἐν ἡμῖν ὁμοίῳ... ἔστι γάρ τι καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν αὐτοῦ. Once again, παρ' ἡμῖν may suggest the presence rather than the immanence of the One to the self. Yet underlying these psasages is the idea of an *affinity* between the One and the faculty which attains to union with it. Starting from the Empedoclean principle that 'like knows like' (16), Plotinus can assert (III 5, 9, 44) that 'nothing which has absolutely no part in the Good would ever seek after the Good'. This affinity with the Good, or One, is the reason for the self's desire for union with God (VI 7, 31, 8). Without it, the self could not achieve that transformation of its own vision in which union consists (VI 9, 11, 22: τὸ δὲ ἴσως ἦν οὐ θέαμα, ἀλλὰ ἄλλος τρόπος τοῦ ἰδεῖν). In this union, the vision and the 'light' of the One are one, V 3, 17, 33: καὶ τοῦτο τὸ τέλος τἀληθινὸν ψυχῇ, ἐφάψασθαι φωτὸς ἐκείνου καὶ αὐτῷ αὐτὸ θεάσασθαι, οὐκ ἄλλῳ φωτί, ἀλλὰ τῷ, δι' οὗ καὶ ὁρᾷ. δι' οὗ γὰρ ἐφωτίσθη, τοῦτό ἐστιν, ὃ δεῖ θεάσασθαι. Or, as Plotinus says elsewhere, VI 7, 36, 19: ἡ θέα πλήσασα φωτὸς τὰ ὄμματα οὐ δι' αὐτοῦ πεποίηκεν ἄλλο ὁρᾶν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ φῶς τὸ ὅραμα ἦν. 'The light itself is the vision': vision is unmediated, for the normal medium, the δι' οὗ of intellectual vision (17), light, is one with the object of vision (ὅραμα). In fact, Plotinus finds a closer analogy to mystical vision in the physical mechanism of sight, as he understands this latter: the eye contains within itself a light, observable in darkness or when the eyes are closed (V 5, 7, 22 ff.), and ultimately the reason why the eye sees by means of the cognate, 'external' light (18). In some similar way, νοῦς has vision of the One, αὐτὸν ... συναγαγὼν εἰς τὸ εἴσω ... θεάσεται οὐκ ἄλλο ἐν ἄλλῳ φῶς, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ καθ' ἑαυτὸ μόνον καθαρὸν ἐφ' αὑτοῦ ἐξαίφνης φανέν (V 5, 7, 31 ff.) But, Plotinus adds, afterwards we are uncertain whether the light was from without or within.

This uncertainty – in the last resort, an uncertainty about whether to describe the One as immanent or transcendent – is, despite some more forthright assertions of Plotinus on the unitive nature of vision (19), symptomatic of his refusal to posit complete identity between the self and the Absolute. Although the metamorphosis of vision (20), the 'simplification' (ἅπλωσις) (21)

(16) VI 9, 11, 31: ἀρχῇ ἀρχὴν ὁρᾷ, καὶ συγγίνεται καὶ τῷ ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον.

(17) Cfr. V 5, 7, 16 ff.

(18) Cfr. I 6, 9, 29.

(19) Cfr. I 6, 9, 18: ὅλος αὐτὸς φῶς ἀληθινὸν μόνον ... (22) ὄψις ἤδη γενόμενος, as well as the assertions that, in mystical vision, 'the two are one', e.g. VI 7, 34, 13 (See note 8 above).

(20) Cfr. P. HADOT'S remarks, *Plotin ou la Simplicité du Regard* (Paris, 1963), p. 169.

(21) As J. TROUILLARD suggests, *La Purification plotinienne*, pp. 97 f., ἅπλωσις is a better term than ἔκστασις (possibly used by Plotinus in the sense of 'ecstasy' only once, VI 9, 11, 23 – but cfr. Theiler's reading [ἐκ]στάσις... [καὶ στάσις]) for Plotinus' view of the nature of the mystical state.

of self, suggests coincidence (as in the convergence-of-centres metaphor discussed above), and so unity of a sort, Plotinus is careful to stress the 'selfhood' of the self, its minimal, yet essential 'difference' in the presence of the One. Plotinus expresses this ontological difference in another type of circle metaphor, V 1, 11, 10: the One is 'in itself' ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ κέντρον ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐστιν, ἔχει δὲ καὶ ἕκαστον τῶν ἐν τῷ κύκλῳ σημεῖον ἐν αὐτῷ, καὶ αἱ γραμμαὶ τὸ ἴδιον προσφέρουσι πρὸς τοῦτο. Each individual (the radii, γραμμαί) has a point (of contact as well as of origin) in the centre, and yet, as radius, is individual (22). Plotinus adds that by means of this centre we at once 'touch' the One and are 'stationed' in it, τῷ γὰρ τοιούτῳ τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐφαπτόμεθα καὶ σύνεσμεν καὶ ἀνηρτήμεθα· ἐνιδρύμεθα δὲ οἳ ἂν συννεύωμεν ἐκεῖ.

Of the terms used by Plotinus here, that of 'touching' (ἐφαπτόμεθα) will concern us later. The notion that we are 'stationed' (ἐνιδρύμεθα) in the One, however, recalls the passage IV 8, 1, 1 ff., with which this paper opened, and deserves comment. It implies that what seemed a momentary, ecstatic state in IV 8, 1 is, in fact, the permanent and natural condition of the soul or 'we' (self). We are always stationed in the One. Why are we not therefore in a continuous ecstasy of union with it? Plotinus goes on to answer this very question in V 1,12. His answer indicates that here, as elsewhere (23), he recognises that certain states may be unconsciously 'ours', becoming conscious only when they enter our sense-perception as activities. Most men are for the most part unconscious of their 'stationing' in the One, some men are never aware of it. Plotinus says of the One at VI 9, 8,33: ἐκεῖνο μὲν οὖν μὴ ἔχον ἑτερότητα ἀεὶ πάρεστιν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ὅταν μὴ ἔχωμεν. And, 36: καὶ ἀεὶ μὲν περὶ αὐτό, οὐκ ἀεὶ δὲ εἰς αὐτὸ βλέπομεν, before going on to evoke the famous image of the chorus, whose (individual) members will sing in unison only when turned towards the coryphaeus. Similarly, at V 5, 12, 11 ff., Plotinus says of the Good that it 'is inherently present to even those asleep and brings them no wonder when some day they see it, since it...is always with them though in their drowse they are not aware of it' (MacKenna–Page). And at VI 7, 35, 27 ff. he asks whether νοῦς intelligizes and enjoys mystical vision successively. The answer is that our demonstration of the nature of such states, since it uses metaphor, presents them as successive states (ὁ δὲ λόγος διδάσκων γινόμενα ποιεῖ), whereas in fact they are permanent, simultaneously present states: ὁ δὲ ἔχει τὸ νοεῖν ἀεί, ἔχει δὲ καὶ τὸ μὴ νοεῖν, ἀλλὰ ἄλλως ἐκεῖνον βλέπειν.

(22) Cfr. IV 2, 2, 24 ff.

(23) Cfr. e.g. I 4, 10, 24 ff.; IV 4, 4, 10 ff. 8, 14 ff.; IV 8, 8, 6 ff. The notion of consciousness, and that of the unconscious, in Plotinus have been the subject of some profitable research. Cf. H.-R. SCHWYZER, "'Bewusst' und 'Unbewusst' bei Plotin", pp. 341–390 (including discussion) in *Les Sources de Plotin*, Entreteins tome V, Fondation Hardt (Geneva, 1960); P. MERLAN, *Monopsychism, Mysticism, Metaconsciousness* (The Hague, 1963), pp. 1–84 (with reference to V 1, 11 and 12 on p. 7); E. W. WARREN, 'Consciousness in Plotinus', *Phronesis*, 9 (1964), 83–97.

If our stationing in the One is constant, the mystical experience of vision is none other than the conscious realization of this stationing. But being ' in ' for Plotinus implies, as was indicated above, deriving or ' proceeding ' from the source ' in ' which one remains. Mystical vision can, therefore, imply the self's procession from the One, as well as being a realization of the self's radical ' coincidence ' with the One. More precisely, the ' return ' of the self to this ' coincidence ' – the so-called mystical ascent – is identical with its incipient procession. ' Procession ' and ' conversion ' (or return) are temporal metaphors for the moment in which the self's originative vision of its principle – a vision that is permanent – is made conscious to itself as pre–intellectual, in an instant of unmediated contact.

These assertions must be elaborated, and it will be the aim of the following pages to attempt to do so.

The original procession is from the One. At V 2, 1, 8 ff. Plotinus says that the One, in its superabundance, creates ' an other ', and that ' this product has turned again to its begetter and been filled and has become its contemplator and so an Intellectual–Principle (νοῦς) ' (MacKenna-Page). In these three phases – that of the indeterminate's procession from the One, that of its becoming determined in virtue of its conversion towards the One, and that of its determination as intellect – is contained the basic teaching of Plotinus on the establishment of the hypostasis νοῦς [24]. It is with the first of these phases, the indeterminate procession of the ' other ', and with the second, at which this ' other ' is about to become determined, that we have to do. This latter moment is the primal conscious, still pre–intellectual vision or contact spoken of above. Such pre–intellectual contact is evoked by Plotinus at V 3, 10, 41. Intellect's object must be distinct from it: ἢ οὐκ ἔσται νόησις αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ θίξις καὶ οἷον ἐπαφὴ μόνον ἄρρητος καὶ ἀνόητος, προνοοῦσα οὔπω νοῦ γεγονότος καὶ τοῦ θιγγάνοντος οὐ νοοῦντος. This state, ' prior ' [25] to the establishment of νοῦς, is described in language which Plotinus uses of the experience of mystical vision [26]. At VI 9, 4, 27 it is said of those who enjoy that vision that they οἷον ἐφάψασθαι καὶ θιγεῖν ὁμοιότητι the One. Chapter 9,56 of the same treatise: ἐφαπτόμεθα θεοῦ. Chapter 11, 24: ἔφεσις

(24) Cfr. V 4, 2, 4 ff.; V 1, 7, 4 ff.

(25) The sense of the metaphorical ' prior ' in προνοοῦσα has been well commented upon by J. TROUILLARD, ' Valeur critique de la mystique plotinienne ', *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, 59 (1961), 432: " Πρό veut dire ' antérieurement ' et évoque la régression vers un déjà-là . . . Le supérieur est aussi l'antérieur. Ce vers quoi on tend est ce dont on est parti ". For some other instances of the term πρό in Plotinus, cfr. III 8, 9, 48.50.54; V 5, 3, 23: προπάτορος (but here the mythological symbolism could adequately account for this ' title ' of the One); 8, 15. For the significance of similar terminology in Proclus see Trouillard, ' Note sur ΠΡΟΟΥΣΙΟΣ et ΠΡΟΝΟΙΑ chez Proclus ', *Revue des Études Grecques*, 73 (1960), 80–87.

(26) A fact observed by W. THEILER, *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus*, p. 157, n. 132, and J. TROUILLARD, *La Purification plotinienne*, p. 109, n. 1, who describes the state as an ' extase germinale permanente ', *ibid.* pp. 98, n. 1, and 238.

πρὸς ἁφήν. For ἄρρητος we may compare chapter 4, 10, where the Platonic text [27] οὐδὲ ῥητὸν οὐδὲ γραπτόν is applied to the One's presence in mystical vision. Finally, ἀνόητος is paralleled in V 5, 8, 22 f., where vision of the One is achieved by the self τῷ ἑαυτοῦ μὴ νῷ.

There are further examples of this equivalent use of language to evoke at once mystical vision and the pre-intellectual, pre-determined phase of the ' other's ' procession from the One. At VI 7, 16, 13 Plotinus writes of the incipient ' looking ' of the latter towards the One: ἀλλ' οὔπω νοῦς ἦν ἐκεῖνο βλέπων, ἀλλ' ἔβλεπεν ἀνοήτως. In chapter 35, 30 of the same treatise Plotinus, after speaking of the two simultaneous powers of the intellectual and the ' visionary ', discussed above, says: καὶ γὰρ ὁρῶν ἐκεῖνον ἔσχε γεννήματα καὶ συνῄσθετο καὶ τούτων γενομένων καὶ ἐνόντων· καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὁρῶν λέγεται νοεῖν, ἐκεῖνον δὲ ᾗ δυνάμει ἔμελλε νοεῖν. The third phase, the determination of the ' other ' as νοῦς in its ἐπιστροφή towards the One, is evoked here: the γεννήματα of the One, the Ideas, are the substance of νοῦς, inherent in it, and ' seen ' in the act of intellection. The One, however, is seen by ' virtue of that power within it by which, in a later (lower) stage, it is to become « Intellective » ' (MacKenna–Page) [28]. There can be no doubt that the term δύναμις (with its Aristotelian connotations) refers to the ' other ' prior to its determination as νοῦς. It is this power, which realizes itself as νοῦς, that enables the self to ' see ' the One in pre-intellective, mystical fashion. Or, making use of the Aristotelian connotations, the potential νοῦς, in turning towards the One to be actualized, sees the One mystically, ' before ' becoming actual νοῦς.

Another passage in VI 7, chapter 17, echoes these themes. Plotinus, speaking of the indeterminate life, which is a ' trace ' of the One and becomes determined as νοῦς (25, ὁρισθεῖσα γὰρ ζωὴ νοῦς) by looking towards the One (16, πρὸς ἕν τι ἰδοῦσα ὁρίζεται τούτῳ) says, 32: ἦν οὖν ἡ μὲν ζωὴ δύναμις πᾶσα, ἡ δὲ ὅρασις ἡ ἐκεῖθεν δύναμις πάντων, ὁ δὲ γενόμενος νοῦς αὐτὰ ἀνεφάνη τὰ πάντα. The life 'in ' the One is ' the collectivity of power ' (MacKenna-Page). As vision it is, if still indeterminate, pre-intellectual (ἐκεῖθεν), nonetheless potentially the πάντα of the intelligible realm, latently possessing the particulars which remain undistinguished in the primal δύναμις πᾶσα. We may relate the notion of δύναμις here to the above passage from VI 7, 35. It is the same power (potency) in both passages which at once lives and ' sees ' in the One and is subsequently realized as intellect. There is also in the passage from chapter 17 an echo of language used elsewhere by Plotinus to ' describe ' the One itself. At III 8, 10, 1 the One is called δύναμις τῶν πάντων,

(27) Bréhier suggests that it is *Parmenides*, 142 a, but Harder suggests a closer parallel in Plato's Seventh Letter, 341 c 5 ff.

(28) Cfr. Harder's translation of the phrase: ' mit dem Vermögen, das ihm hernach zum Denken wird ', and THEILER'S note *ad loc.*, *Plotins Schriften* III b (Hamburg, 1964), p. 510, ' Er (*sc.* der Geist) ist vorläufig nur der Möglichkeit nach denkend, eigentlich noch nicht denkend '.

at V 4, 1, 36 ἡ πάντων δύναμις, 2, 38 ἐκεῖνο μὲν δύναμις πάντων, τὸ δὲ (*sc.* ὁ νοῦς) ἤδη τὰ πάντα, at VI 8, 9, 44 δύναμιν πᾶσαν αὑτῆς ὄντως κυρίαν. There is no question of identifying the ζωή of VI 7, 17 with the One which is (10) ἐπέκεινα ζωῆς [29] in virtue of such similarities of language. But the descriptions of both the One and the life which is the prime procession from it as δύναμις are nonetheless significant. For the subsequents, the unnameable One is δύναμις πάντων. It is, in a sense, the power which is their source, and which maintains them in being 'in' itself. It is, furthermore, analogous, as power, to the potential which, indeterminate as it is, has pre-intellective contact with it [30], and which in turn is identical with the conscious realization of that contact – mystical vision. By means of this power we can 'touch' or 'blend with' [31] the One, our source, experienced as power, VI 9, 4, 26: ὥστε ἐναρμόσαι καὶ οἷον ἐφάψασθαι καὶ θιγεῖν ὁμοιότητι· καὶ τῇ ἐν αὑτῷ δυνάμει συγγενεῖ τῷ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ὅταν οὕτως ἔχῃ ὡς εἶχεν ὅτε ἦλθεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ἤδη δύναται ἰδεῖν ὡς πέφυκεν ἐκεῖνος θεατὸς εἶναι. 'When one, in virtue of the power in it (the One), which is akin to the power in its subsequent, is in the state in which one was when one proceeded from it, then one is able to see in so far as it, of its nature, can be seen' [32]. This coincidence of power leads Plotinus to make some striking (even startling) statements about both the One and its subsequent. At III 8, 8, 31 Plotinus, speaking of the subsequent's contemplation of the One, says that when it contemplates it does not do so as 'one', for in that case intellect would never come to be. No, it began as 'one' (ἀρξάμενος ὡς ἕν), but did not remain as it began, but, all unawares, became many [33]. The phase in which the subsequent 'began as one' is surely that 'in which one was when one proceeded from it (the One)' of VI 9, 4, 28. The 'one-ness' of the subsequent is accounted for by its contact with the One, its being as yet hardly differentiated from the power in the One.

At VI 8, 18, 7 ff. Plotinus (employing his favourite circle metaphor) says that just as a circle is derived from its source, its centre, and is a development of the latter, and 'has something of the nature of that centre', so intel-

(29) Cfr. III 8, 10, 2 ff.

(30) The contact or 'touching' of self and One as a description of the self's originative 'vision' of the One, as well as of mystical vision, has been discussed above. The same metaphor is used to describe the existential dependence (ultimately identical with such types of vision) of the self on the One at V 1, 11, 13.

(31) For the use of the metaphor of 'blending' to describe mystical union see RIST, *Plotinus*, pp. 222 ff.

(32) The text quoted follows the MSS. and is adopted by Harder (whose punctuation is also followed) and Cilento. Bréhier's text incorporates Müller's unnecessary emendations, which are also the basis of the MacKenna-Page version. My translation conveys the sense which Harder finds in the text, and which is substantiated by the passages and notions discussed on the preceding pages.

(33) MACKENNA-PAGE translate differently: 'The Highest began as a unity...'. Even allowing for metaphor, it would be daring for Plotinus to attribute 'becoming manifold' to the One, without softening the expression by some such word as οἷον.

lect and being are derived from the One and dependent upon it, and by reason of that intellective nature [34] μαρτυρεῖν τὸν οἷον ἐν ἑνὶ νοῦν οὐ νοῦν ὄντα· ἓν γάρ (21). Nobody takes the phrase 'the intellect in the One' literally [35], and Plotinus modifies it by the word οἷον and by the words which follow. Yet by using such a striking phrase, Plotinus suggests that the intellect which is a 'development' of the One has 'something of the One's nature': this is implied in the comparison with the centre–circle relation [36]. But the term 'intellect in the One' is a potentially confusing one, and we may feel that some of the passages discussed earlier offered a better formulation of Plotinus' ideas.

In another passage, V 3, 14, 13, Plotinus says that when we have 'intellect pure' (νοῦν καθαρόν) we divine that it is 'intellect within, which gives being and all of that realm'. The phrase 'intellect within' (ὁ ἔνδον νοῦς) as source of being recalls the 'intellect in the One' of VI 8, 18, 21. But in the former passage Plotinus quickly distinguishes between such intellect and the One. Nonetheless, the notion of a primal intellect is not unrelated to the originative vision of the subsequent which, in the contemplation of the One, is established as intellect and being. And we have seen that Plotinus was concerned, on several occasions, with describing this originative vision as in some way intellective. The phrase νοῦν καθαρόν for example, recalls the mystical vision, VI 9, 3, 26 καθαρῷ τῷ νῷ, or the νοῦς ἐρῶν of VI 7, 35, 24. We can now understand better why Plotinus attempted to characterize such vision as intellective [37]. It is, in fact, a phase of the vision which culminates in intellect. It is (to resume a theme discussed above) potential intellect. But essentially it is pre–intellective, and, when he is at his most accurate, Plotinus gives expression to this by the metaphorical terms of 'stationing', 'touching', 'blending' or 'looking devoid of intellection'.

In a fu:ther evocation of such pre-intellective vision prior to the constitution of intellect as intellect, Plotinus says at V 3, 11, 1 ff. that it fails to 'know' the One, although it tries to grasp it as a simple unity (ἐπιβάλλειν θέλων ὡς ἁπλῷ): in fact, it knows it only as a multiple. Originally the subject was pre-intellective (ὥρμησε. :. ἐπ' αὐτὸ οὐχ ὡς νοῦς, ἀλλ' ὡς ὄψις οὔπω ἰδοῦσα), as mere undetermined tendency (12, ἔφεσις μόνον καὶ ἀτύπωτος ὄψις) [38]. The incipient 'grasping' of the One (which is 'succeeded' by the establishment of intellect) is again referred to, 13: ἐπέβαλε μὲν ἐκείνῳ. Now the equi-

(34) ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ νοερᾶς φύσεως: cf. THEILER'S note, *Plotins Schriften* IV b (Hamburg, 1967), p. 390.

(35) THEILER, *Plotins Schriften* IV b, p. 390, calls it 'kühn' and points out that in the previous treatise Plotinus had shown exhaustively that the One has no intellection, VI 7, 41, 1 ff.

(36) The equivalence of being 'in' and proceeding 'from', mentioned earlier in this paper, may also apply here.

(37) Cfr. (with slightly different emphasis) the perceptive remarks of E. v. IVÁNKA, *Plato Christianus* (Einsiedeln, 1964), p. 328.

(38) Cfr. V 6, 5, 9 f.

valence of language in descriptions of this pre-intellective state and mystical states is once again illustrated here: the term ἔφεσις recalls such phrases as ἔφεσις πρὸς ἁφήν (VI 9, 11, 24). Furthermore, the term ἐπιβάλλειν, used here of an attempt to 'grasp' the oneness of the One, is also employed by Plotinus in evocations of mystical vision. At III 8, 9, 21 he asks by what direct intuition (τίνι... ἐπιβολῇ ἀθρόᾳ;) can the One be grasped [39]. At VI 7, 35, 21 the νοῦς ἐρῶν (24) is said to see τὰ ἐπέκεινα αὐτοῦ ἐπιβολῇ τινι καὶ παραδοχῇ. At VI 8, 11, 22 of our 'grasp' of the One: δεῖ... ἔξω ποιήσασθαι τῆς ἐπιβολῆς τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸ πάντα τόπον. The terms προσβολή, προσβάλλειν are equivalent, and are also used. At V 5, 10, 7 Plotinus urges he who would see the Good: προσβαλεῖς... ἀθρόως ὁ προσβάλλων [40].

The term ἐπιβολή (and its equivalents) was, as Rist reminds us, used technically by the Epicurean school, and apparently by no other philosophers prior to Plotinus [41]. It is not necessary to assume that Plotinus deliberately chooses it as an 'adapted' Epicurean term to evoke mystical intuition: for him, with or without the aid of Epicurean materialistic analogies, the term can clearly signify a pre-cognitive 'seeing' which does not objectify the 'seen', but 'grasps it' directly, and is 'oned' with it intuitively [42]. Significantly, it is the very term which Plotinus, in the late treatise VI 7, applies to the One itself. At chapter 39,2 [43] he says that the One has no more than a ἁπλῆ τις ἐπιβολὴ αὐτῷ πρὸς αὐτό. I have attempted elsewhere to evaluate the significance of this phrase [44], arguing that there are a few texts in Plotinus which suggest that he conceived of the One as an Absolute Self [45], and that the description of the One as ἐπιβολή lends support to this suggestion, in so

(39) The vision of the One as light is implicit in this phrase, cfr. V 5, 7, 8.

(40) Cfr. III 8, 10, 32.

(41) Cfr. RIST, *Plotinus*, pp. 49 ff. For a discussion of the term in Epicureanism see C. BAILEY, *The Greek Atomists and Epicurus* (Oxford, 1928, reprinted New York, 1964), pp. 559–576; N. W. DE WITT, '*Epicurus*, Περὶ Φαντασίας', « TAPhA », 70 (1939), 414–427, esp. 421 ff.; G. VLASTOS, REVIEW of F. M. CORNFORD'S *Principium Sapientiae*, « Gnomon », 27 (1955), 70 f.

(42) The term ἐπιβολή can also be used of other types of activity in Plotinus, as, e.g., the soul's 'complete grasp' (ἐπιβολὴν ἀθρόαν) of the intelligible order in IV 4, 1, 20, or the eye's vision of light, ἀθρόᾳ... προσβολῇ, in V 5, 7, 8, cfr. II 8, 1, 40. It can be used of our intuitive (as opposed to discursive) 'grasp' of the notions of eternity and time, III 7, 1, 4, ἀθροωτέραις ἐπιβολαῖς. Particularly interesting is II 4, 10, 1 ff. What τῆς διανοίας ἡ ἐπιβολή 'grasps' indeterminate matter? Only by the indeterminate can the indeterminate be known: ἡ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸ ἐπιβολὴ ἀόριστος. The latter phrase, analogous to the ἐπιβολή of the One at VI 7, 39, 2 and of our vision of the One at III 8, 9, 21, is one example of Plotinus' parallel 'descriptions' of the One and matter. Cfr. also III 6, 15, 27 (of matter) with V 3, 10, 34 ff. 13, 24 ff. (of the One). The term ἐπιβολή is technical in Proclus for our 'apprehension' of the One, cfr. R. KLIBANSKY'S remarks (with references to several texts) in *Plato Latinus* III (London, 1953), pp. 92 f., and W. BEIERWALTES, *Proklos: Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik* (Frankfurt, 1965), pp. 372 ff.

(43) In the Harder edition; 38, 25 in Bréhier.

(44) 'The Self and the One'. See note 9 above.

(45) Cfr. VI 8, 14, 42.21, 32.

far as it re-echoes descriptions of the highest (because primal) intuition of the human self. Furthermore, this description of the One supports my suggestion that the only adequate name for human identity in its original phase is 'the self'. The converse is also true. Human selfhood illuminates – in so far as this is possible – the presence of the One as self to itself, and to the subsequent with which it has contact as 'another self' (οἷον ἄλλον αὐτόν, V 1, 11, 10). For example, the One is said to be (VI 8, 15, 1) ἐράσιμον καὶ ἔρως [ὁ] αὐτὸς καὶ αὐτοῦ ἔρως, a description echoing that of the mystical self, the much-quoted νοῦς ἐρῶν of VI 7, 35, 24 [46]. Or, of soul in its union with the One it is asserted that it has οἷον σύνεσις καὶ συναίσθησις αὐτοῦ (V 8, 11, 23), words that are used of the One itself in some early Plotinian treatises [47].

Plotinus' notion of the relationship of the human self to the One – a relationship which at once makes mystical vision possible and makes it the pre-intellective state of the self – foreshadows, albeit in unsystematic form, Proclus' concept of the τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν ἕν (or τὸ ἓν τῆς ψυχῆς) which enables us to see the One [48]. It is not the purpose of the present paper to trace the development, in later Neoplatonism, of the ideas discussed in it. But it is worthwhile pointing out, in conclusion, that although Plotinus' references to the presence of the One are scattered and comparatively few in number, they imply a consistency which Proclus, at least, could exploit and develop.

(46) The comparison is noted by W. THEILER, 'Diotima neuplatonisch', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 50 (1968), 44 [= *Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur* (Berlin, 1970), p. 516].

(47) Cfr. V 4, 2, 17 f.; V 1, 7, 12.

(48) Cfr. e.g. *In Parm.* 1081, 4 ff. J. TROUILLARD ('Note sur ΠΡΟΟΥΣΙΟΣ et ΠΡΟΝΟΙΑ chez Proclus') and W. BEIERWALTES (*Proklos*, p. 380) have both suggested that the origin of this concept of Proclus' (which BEIERWALTES, *ibid.* pp. 367–382, discusses in detail) may be found in Plotinus.

Memory in Plotinus and two early texts of St. Augustine

It has long been recognized that in *De ordine* II, ii, 6–7 we have the earliest account of Augustine's discussion of memory, recorded in the argument of his interlocuter Licentius.[1] Augustine recalls that the argument is one previously used by himself (*ibid.* ii, 7), part of which he would now criticize. In an analysis of the passage, K. Winkler[2] attempted to show that Augustine was thereby trying 'to free himself from too rigorous an adherence to teachings of Plotinus'.[3] I should like to argue that whereas the account which Augustine criticizes may approximate, in a superficial, generalized sense, to Neoplatonic doctrines,[4] it does not–if closely examined–coincide with Plotinus' teaching on memory, nor does its partial refutation by Augustine constitute a clear-cut rebuttal of Plotinus' views. I shall first of all summarize the argument of the *De ordine* passage, before going on to consider the nuanced, problematic–even puzzling–discussion of memory in the *Enneads*. It will, I hope, become apparent that certain aspects of Plotinus' account may fruitfully be compared and contrasted with views of Augustine, not only in *De ordine*, but also in another of his early philosophical texts, the letter to Nebridius (*Ep.* VII), in such a way as to throw light upon the development of Augustine's theory of memory.

Licentius' argument is based on a naively dualistic view of human nature. Only the soul *(anima)* of the sage, perfectly purified by the practice of virtue *(perpurgata virtutibus)*, is worthy of the name of sage. When we call a man *sapiens*, we exclude 'that part of him by which he uses the senses' (*ibid.* ii, 5). The latter part, described as *sordes atque exuviae*, is either an accretion of the soul or a lower, subject part of the soul. In that case, the

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[1] Cf. J. Guitton, Le Temps et L'Éternité chez Plotin et Saint Augustin (Paris, 1933), p. 201.

[2] K. Winkler, 'La Théorie augustinienne de la mémoire à son point de départ', Augustinus Magister I (Paris, 1954), 511–519.

[3] Winkler, op. cit. 512.

[4] Since M. N. Bouillet's edition of the Enneads (Paris, 1857–1861), controversy has been unabated as to the possible contents of the libri Platonicorum (Conf. VII, ix, 13) in which Augustine, from 386 onwards, encountered Neoplatonic doctrines. On the methodological difficulties of the question see the remarks (discouraging any certainty) of P. Hadot, Marius Victorinus: Recherches sur sa vie et ses œuvres (Paris, 1971), pp. 201–210.

ruling part of the soul—the *intellectus*—can alone be called *sapiens*. Now memory resides in the subject soul, for the senses deal with transient things, and these are also the objects of memory *(Quibus autem est memoria necessaria, nisi praetereuntibus et quasi fugientibus rebus?)*. Memory is the *peculium* of the servile soul; the sage, like an exemplary *dominus*, supervises, in a disinterested fashion, the uses to which this *peculium* is put.[1] But just as the aid of memory is not needed when we can actually see objects, so the sage, whose intellectual eye is constantly focused on the objects of knowledge, will not need memory (*ibid.* ii, 7).

To what extent can this account be said to have, in Winkler's phrase, an 'ideological background'[2] traceable to Plotinus? *Enneads* IV 3, 25–IV 4, 5 give an exploratory account, not so much of the nature of memory,[3] as of what faculty, or faculties, can remember. Initially, Licentius might seem to follow Plotinus in distinguishing between a higher, philosophical soul and a lower soul in man (IV 3, 27, 1ff.). The former is the 'man himself' (27, 2: *καθ' ἣν ἡμεῖς*, 27, 13: *ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλῆς αὐτός*), as is the *sapiens* who is pure *intellectus*. On the other hand, the notion that the rational or immortal aspect of man constitutes the real man is a commonplace of the Greek—especially the Platonic—philosophical tradition.[4] And precisely in the passage under discussion, Plotinus expresses reservations about defining our real self merely in terms of the higher soul, 27, 7: *τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ τὸ εἴδωλον, οἶμαι, χρὴ νομίζειν ἡμᾶς*. These reservations, ultimately due to Plotinus' increasing awareness of the relevance of historical experience to the definition of the individual's personal identity,[5] will affect his account of the scope of memory. The argument of Licentius betrays no such hesitation in defining the real self, and no trace of its consequences for memory. Further, Plotinus admits memory to the higher soul (27, 3ff.). He distinguishes carefully between the faculty of sense-perception and that of imagination (*τὸ φανταστικόν*): the latter is the organ of memory proper (29, 23. 31). It follows that both souls have imaginative faculties (31, 1ff.). In fact, unlike sense-perception, memory does not need the body (26, 10ff. 22ff.). Even memory of sensibles is the memory of an immaterial impression, and is a type of intellectual activity (26, 31: *ὁ τρόπος οἷον νόησις καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν*). Still less can the body be said to be involved in the memory of psychological or intellectual activities (26, 32ff.). In fact, the body is a hindrance to memory (26, 50ff.).

The insistence of Licentius that the sage, who has all knowledge present to his intellect, will not need to recollect any, is superficially the closest remark

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1 On the origin of the *peculium* metaphor see Winkler, op. cit. 515.

2 Winkler, op. cit. 513, n. 1. 3 For that cf. III 6, 2, 42ff.; IV 6, 3.

4 Cf. the pseudo-Platonic First Alicibiades 129e11–130e9, esp. 130c5: *ἡ ψυχή ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος*. Also, Plato, Phaedo 115c6ff.; Aristotle, Protrepticus fr. 6 (Ross); E. N. 1166a16, 1168b35; Cleanthes, SVF I 538; Cicero, Somn. Scip. 26; Tusc. Disp. I, 52.

5 See my „Plotinos' Philosophy of the Self" (Dublin, 1973), chapter 2.

to a Plotinian theory. Plotinus is speaking of the soul in the intelligible realm (IV 4, 1, 1: *ψυχὴ ἐν τῷ νοητῷ*) after death, when he says that it will have no memory of its experiences in this life (1, 4). In the non-durational eternity of intellectual existence there will not even be memory of intelligibles, for there is no progress or transition (1, 15: *ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ διέξοδος οὐδὲ μετάβασις ἀφ' ἑτέρου ἐπ' ἄλλο*) to make memory possible, no 'before' which can be recollected 'after'. The soul, behaving as a *νοῦς* (1, 19), will have no memory even of its identity as a person (2, 1ff.), even though it has self-consciousness as being one with the intelligible (2, 31ff.). It is not legitimate to suppose, as Winkler does,[1] that the account of the soul in the intelligible realm after death, or prior to incarnation (or descent, IV 4, 3; 5, 11ff.), can be used as evidence for Plotinus' views about its relation to memory in this life. To begin with, *all* souls acquire memory when they descend to the level of the heavens from the intelligible sphere (IV 4, 5, 11ff.), and acquire an astral body (cf. IV 3, 15, 1ff.) or *ὄχημα*.[2] Further, Plotinus stresses that the higher soul must *strive to forget* memories of the lower soul (IV 3, 32, 10): there is a hint of a moral struggle (31, 13ff.) which can only be resolved by the mastery of the imaginative faculty of the higher soul (31, 9ff.). The ideal aim of the philosopher should be that his soul be forgetful (32, 17), but it is stressed that this forgetfulness is only a stage towards the final subsumption of soul into *νοῦς* after death; the soul will carry a few traces of its life here with it nonetheless (32, 23), only to jettison most of these in the heavens as it reascends. This would seem to argue against the perfectibility of the sage in this life. Yet that is what Licentius maintains.

Now the susceptibility of even the higher soul to memory creates a special problem within Plotinus' system, the existence and nature of which has not always been fully realized.[3] To begin with, both souls have memories, individual and shared, in this life (27, 3f.). After their separation in death, each retains for a longer period its own memories, for a shorter time that of the other (27, 5f.). The higher soul, before being fully liberated from its individual body, retains memories of everything done and experienced in the man's life (27, 15f.). As death approaches, even memories of earlier existences occur. After individual disembodiment, these memories will also subsist, but they will grow fainter in time (27, 20ff.). But when the soul is fully free, what will it remember? Plotinus' answer to this question is not suggested until later in the discussion (31, 16ff.). He says that the higher soul is selective in its retention of memories. The good man can remember friends and family, homeland and other worthy things impassively (32, 3: *ἀπαθῶς*).[4]

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1 Winkler, op. cit. 516, n. 2.

2 On the astral body in Plotinus see E. R. Dodds, Proclus: The Elements of Theology, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1963), p. 318.

3 E. W. Warren, 'Memory in Plotinus', Classical Quarterly N. S. 15 (1965), 253ff., distinguishes between the two accounts of soul's memory after death.

4 Plotinus is undoubtedly influenced by the Stoic tenet that the wise man is *ἀπαθής*, cf. Diog. Laert. VII, 117; SVF III 574. But whereas Plotinus argues that, theoretically,

In fact, insofar as higher and lower soul are conjoined, the higher soul experiences the noble emotions (32, 5: τὰ ἀστεῖα τῶν παθῶν): these would presumably be the shared experiences equivalent to the common memories of both souls (27, 3f.). Now here Plotinus is, of course, speaking of the higher soul in this life: but his remarks pinpoint the problem of the liberated soul's memory. For how has the higher soul come to forget these noble emotions, as IV 4, 1f. suggests? Or does it really forget them? IV 3, 31, 16ff. spoke of selective remembering.

An answer is suggested in IV 4, 3 and 4. The soul which revolts from the intolerable unity of being with the intelligible (3, 1: οὐκ ἀνασχομένη τὸ ἕν), desiring to be its own separate self, acquires an apparent memory of itself. This must refer to the memory of earthly experience that constitutes a person's identity. Plotinus is clearly referring to souls which have already been incarnate. Memories of experiences in this life drag the soul downwards (3, 4). In fact, a soul's memories determine its level and status (3, 5: καὶ ὅλως, οὗ μνημονεύει, ἐκεῖνό ἐστι καὶ γίνεται). For imagination is not so much a *possession* of something as a *state* of soul, or the quality of its vision (3, 7: ἡ δὲ φαντασία αὐτῇ οὐ τῷ ἔχειν, ἀλλ' οἷα ὁρᾷ καὶ [οἷα] διάκειται). Plotinus asserts that when the soul gives itself to the lower, it has what it longs for corresponding to its memory and imagination (4, 5f.), i. e., it is not reduced to the lower things, for it possesses things (higher and lower) only in a secondary fashion, unlike νοῦς, which becomes one with the totality of its objects (3, 10). Memory is to be understood not merely in the sense of conscious recollection, 'but so as to include a condition induced by the past experience or vision' (4, 9f., trans. MacKenna-Page). So memory can operate unconsciously, insofar as it can be a latent disposition or habit which would induce a soul to descend to a lower level. In fact, the type of memory described as a state of soul at 3, 8 is often latent, and more pernicious precisely on account of its unconscious presence (4, 12ff.). Now, Plotinus continues, if a reincarnate soul brings such memories with it, it can never really have shed them. In fact, it possessed them, when in the intelligible, in potency (4, 15: δυνάμει). In other words, they remained, but unconsciously, for the conscious activity of the soul in the intelligible realm was unfailing intellection. In the descent of the soul, pure intellectual activity gave way to the realization or actualization of the potential historical memories of the individual soul, now seeking once more to assert its individuality to the full in re-embodiment (4, 15–20).

Thus the soul in the intelligible realm can be said to forget its memories acquired in this life, yet these memories are not annihilated. They have become unconscious, and may return to the soul's consciousness. The apparent discrepancy between two accounts of the soul's memory, or lack of it, is resolved by means of the notion of consciousness, which Plotinus often uses in a novel and effective way.[1] At IV 3, 30, 11ff. the soul's unfailing intellection in this life is mentioned, but we do not always think consciously: νόησις is one thing, the conscious apprehension (ἀντίληψις) of νόησις is another. In fact, 'we' can only be said to think insofar as we have ἀντίληψις of our thought.

all souls are ἀπαθεῖς (cf. III 6, 1–5), the embodied human soul is liable to be affected by its environment: on this cf. the pertinent remarks, with references to Plotinus passages, of H. J. Blumenthal, 'Soul, World-Soul and Individual Soul in Plotinus', in Le Néoplatonisme, Colloques Internationaux du C.N.R.S. (Paris, 1971), p. 62.

To return to *De ordine* II, ii. Augustine (ii, 7) criticizes Licentius by asking whether memory will not be necessary to the sage in the transmission of knowledge, *propter honestas ac necessarias disciplinas*. This is a duty which he must perform for others *(officium beneficia tribuendi quibus potest et maxime)*. In order to arrange the disposition of his arguments and be prepared for the task of instruction, the teacher will need to use memory, which remains *non propter se quidem sed propter suos sibi tamen necessarium*. Winkler suggests that Augustine's ideas differ notably from Plotinus' here. He admits that Plotinus was a devoted and conscientious teacher, but adduces as evidence for the difference from Augustine the fact that social virtues play a minor role in his system.[2] But that factor is not crucial in the present context: what is important to know is whether Plotinus agrees or disagrees with Augustine on the specific point of the indispensability of memory in the preparation and conduct of philosophical instruction. It so happens that Plotinus says something relevant to the relation of language to thought in the course of his discussion of memory. What faculty, he asks, recalls intellections (IV 3, 30, 1)? Is there an imaginative faculty for these? He suggests that there is an image (φαντασία) which acts as a cipher (εἰκών) for intellection, enabling us to recall the latter. It may be the λόγος accompanying the thought, for the latter remains within, but is expressed by its λόγος,[3] which in turn is reflected in the imagination. This reflection can be apprehended and recalled. Now if the λόγος is the vehicle of recollecting and expressing ideas, we might reasonably infer that λόγος and remembered image are, for Plotinus, *a fortiori* essential to philosophical discourse. If we do not recall the λόγος we cannot discuss ideas. Plotinus and Augustine imply something similar: even if Augustine expresses himself in terms of the *rhetor* preparing a speech *(quod ex dispositione eloquatur)*, he is speaking of an extension of the activity described by Plotinus. Finally, Licentius' assertion that even if memory suggests things occasionally to the sage in his

[1] Cf. I 4, 10, 24ff.; IV 4, 8, 14ff.; IV 8, 8, 6ff.; V 1, 12, 5ff.; V 5, 12, 11f.; VI 7, 35, 27ff.; VI 9, 8, 33ff. See H.-R. Schwyzer, '"Bewußt" und "Unbewußt" bei Plotin', pp. 341–390 (including discussion) in Les Sources de Plotin, Entretiens tome V, Fondation Hardt (Geneva, 1960); E. W. Warren, 'Consciousness in Plotinus', Phronesis 9 (1964), 83–97.

[2] Winkler, op.cit. 517.

[3] The background to this is the late Stoic teaching on the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and προφορικός, cf. SVF II 135; Sext. Emp. Adv. math. VIII, 275; Porphyry, De abst. 187, 20; Enn. V 1, 3, 7: οἷον λόγος ὁ ἐν προφορᾷ λόγου τοῦ ἐν ψυχῇ.

discourse, this is not an intellectual activity *(hoc facit non quasi ratiocinando)*, contradicts Plotinus' insistence that memory *is* a type of *νόησις* (IV 3, 26, 31).

Thus the only resemblance between the arguments of Licentius and Plotinus' views is the superficial one that equates the description of the sage with that of the higher soul in the intelligible realm after death; though even here, as we have seen, Plotinus has a complex theory of unconscious memory missing in the Licentius passage. It is possible that some such description of the *σπουδαῖος* as we find in *Enneads* I 4, 4, 16 is applied to the problem of memory,[1] without reference to or awareness of Plotinus' own discussion of the latter in *Enneads* IV 3–4: but that does not entitle us to describe Licentius' arguments as Plotinian. And I have suggested that Augustine's reply may be Plotinian rather than the contrary.

The following cannot hope to do justice to the contents of *Epp.* VI and VII. But it may be interesting to see whether the discussion between Nebridius and Augustine there can be related in any way to Plotinus' account. In *Ep.* VI, 1 Nebridius argues that there can be no memory without *phantasia (omnis . . . memoria sine phantasia esse non possit)*. In recalling acts of understanding or thought, he argues, we recall in virtue of 'something conditioned by space or time' which can be reproduced by the imagination, and by means of which we can recall the idea. This 'something' may be words which we would associate with the idea. At first sight, this argument is strikingly close to that of *Enneads* IV 3, 30, in which the *λόγος* is the vehicle of the idea. The Stoic concept[2] seems, however, to have influenced Nebridius less than the tradition of the Aristotelian discussion of memory.[3] No specific Plotinian influence is necessary.

Augustine's answer to this begins by determining that memory does not necessarily deal with things which are passing away.[4] Objects which still exist—e. g. Carthage—can be remembered. It is the fact that we saw Carthage in the past that enables us to remember it now: a fact which Augustine wishes to separate from the question of Carthage's permanence, or lack of it. Both Aristotle, in saying *ἡ μνήμη τοῦ γενομένου* (*De Mem.* 1), and Plotinus, in asserting (IV 4, 6, 2; cf. IV 3, 25, 10f.) *τῶν γὰρ γεγενημένων*

[1] Winkler, op. cit. 513f., adduces several passages from Enn. I 4, some of which may be echoed in Licentius' words. But if Augustine is using a version of I 4 here (and none of Winkler's parallels are convincing enough to enable us to draw this conclusion), he has clearly misapplied what Plotinus intended to be an ideal description of the philosopher-sage to the psychological role of memory in this life and the afterlife, a topic on which Plotinus himself is, as we have seen, less optimistic about the 'detachment' of the philosopher.

[2] See p. 465, note 3.

[3] No memory without an image: Aristotle, De mem. 1; the association of ideas in recollection, ibid. 2.

[4] Ep. VII, i, 1: *Primum ergo videndum est non nos semper rerum praetereuntium meminisse, sed plerumque manentium.*

καὶ παρεληλυθότων ἡ μνήμη, failed to distinguish adequately between the pastness of the act of perception and that of its objects. This lack of clarity leads Licentius, in *De ord.* II, ii, 3, to assert: *quibus autem est memoria necessaria, nisi praetereuntibus et quasi fugientibus rebus?* It is this notion that Augustine now attacks: memory need not always deal with things which are past, as some assert (*Ep.* VII, i, 2: *dicentes memoriam praeteritarum rerum)*, using this as an objection to the Platonic recollection *(anamnesis)* theory. Augustine takes the notion of eternity: it can be grasped by the mind without any image which imagination might use as a vehicle.[1] Yet it could never enter our minds otherwise than through our remembering it, Augustine maintains. We know 'eternity', and, as in the case of other objects of knowledge, we have been distracted from that knowledge, so that recollection is needed to recall it.[2] What Augustine is insisting upon is the validity of a memory of the present, or of objects outside of time, and, to answer Nebridius, of a memory which does not need the aid of any *phantasia* conditioned by space or time. Now Plotinus, in *Enneads* IV 3, 25, speaks of *ἀνάμνησις* in much the same terms. He distinguishes it from *μνήμη*, for we cannot say that *νοῦς* remembers what it always possesses and *is* (25, 24ff.). Similarly, the soul in its higher, intellectual phase does not so much remember as actualize its intelligible contents (25, 27ff.). Now it is the soul which actualizes its content that the ancients describe as recollecting. Students of Plotinus have neglected somewhat his critical use of the *anamnesis* theory here.[3] His words suggest that he distinguishes between the Platonic account, whereby the soul recalls the separate intelligible objects seen in a prior existence, and his own teaching, in which *νοῦς* and intellectual soul constantly exercise their self-reflective thinking activity (Cf. IV 3, 30, 11ff.), but in which this activity, in our embodied existence, is not always actualized, but potential or unconscious.

Now *Ep.* VII marks a stage in Augustine's progressive abandonment of his limited acceptance of the Platonic *anamnesis* theory, and this despite the fact that the letter defends *anamnesis* against an invalid objection. In *Sol.* II, xx, 35 and *De quant. an.* xx, 34 (written in 386 and 388 respectively) the act of learning is equated with recollection, a notion which gives way to Augustine's characteristic *illuminatio* theory in *De mag.* xii, 40 and *De lib.*

[1] Ep. VII, i, 2: *ipsa aeternitas semper manet nec aliqua imaginaria figmenta conquirit, quibus in mentem quasi vehiculis veniat.*

[2] Ep. VII, i, 2: *a quibus quia defluximus, et aliter alia videre coepimus, ea nos reminiscendo revisere, id est per memoriam.*

[3] Admittedly, Plotinus generally refers to the anamnesis theory with approval: III 7, 1, 22; IV 7, 12, 8; III 5, 1, 34ff.; I 8, 15, 28. Sometimes he speaks of it as *μνήμη*, e. g. V 3, 8, 51; VI 7, 22, 17 (for the passages, see W. Theiler, 'Ueberblick über Plotins Philosophie und Lehrweise', Plotins Schriften VI (Hamburg, 1971), p. 135). But that does not lessen the perceptive critique of IV 3, 25, which is more consistent with Plotinus' acceptance of the Aristotelian identification of *νοῦς* and *νοούμενον*, cf. Met. 1075a3–5.

arb. I, vi, 15; II, ii, 4; viii, 21; viii, 23; ix, 26 (the former written in 389–the same year as *Ep.* VII–the latter completed in 395).[1] There is no mention of the illuminating aid of God in *Ep.* VII;[2] but one essential feature of the *illuminatio* theory is stressed, the validity of a memory of *what now is.* When Augustine fully realizes the implications of the constant *presence* of truth to the mind, he will deliberately disassociate himself from the Platonic *anamnesis* theory, with its suggestion of *past* acquisition of knowledge (Cf. *Retr.* I, iv, 4). Not that Augustine's use of the Platonic theory ever necessarily implies his acceptance of the belief in a prior existence of the soul. Even in *Ep.* VII, where he unselfconsciously speaks the language of Plato *(haec aliquando vidimus mente)*, there is no compelling reason to infer that he *must* be speaking of pre-existence.[3] For Plotinus the notion of pre-

[1] F. Körner, 'Die Entwicklung Augustins von der Anamnesis- zur Illuminationslehre im Lichte seines Innerlichkeitsprinzips', Theologische Quartalschrift 134 (1954), 412–414, adduces passages to show that even in the earlier treatises Augustine is developing towards the *illuminatio* theory: e. g. De beata vita iv, 35; Sol. I, vi, 13; II, xix, 33; De imm. an. x, 17. One might add De ord. II, xiv, 41 and–above all–Sol. I, viii, 15.

[2] But cf. another letter to Nebridius, also written in 389–Ep. XIII, 4: we know (intellectual objects or the mind) by asking God about what is in us (*de eo, quod apud nos est, Deum consulendo*).

[3] F. Körner, op. cit. 402f., tends to assume that Augustine believes in the prior existence of the soul at the time of writing Ep. VII, but admits that he does not explicitly assert this belief in his early writings. Körner, using J. Hessen's (Augustins Metaphysik der Erkenntnis (Berlin, 1931), p. 67) phrase, speaks of it as a 'latente Prämisse', or suggests (op. cit. 405) that Augustine shows an 'inclination' (Neigung) towards believing in pre-existence. In this he would agree with E. Gilson, Introduction à l'Étude de Saint Augustin, 3rd. ed. (Paris, 1949), pp. 94f. But the texts referred to by Gilson and Körner do not warrant even this qualified assertion. De Trin. XII, xv, 24 is a critique of the Platonic *anamnesis* theory: one cannot infer that it is a self-critique of views formerly held by Augustine. If Augustine, in Retr. I, i, 3, referring to his phrase about the soul (C. Acad. II, ix, 22), *securior rediturus in coelum,* says that he should have written *iturus* for *rediturus,* to avoid implying that the soul falls into embodiment as a punishment, he need only be referring to a possible misconstruction by the reader of his intentions. In fact, he does not recant the word, justifying it as consistent with Cyprian, De dom. orat. 16 and Eccl. XII, 7, and not contradicting Rom. IX, 11. Sol. II, xx, 35 refers to recollection, but without speaking of pre-existence. In Retr. I, iv, 4 Augustine's *hoc . . . improbo* refers to the way he has expressed himself, and he goes on to make explicit the difference between his *illuminatio* theory and Plato's theory of *anamnesis.* He does not say, or even suggest, that he ever held the latter, merely that his words could be (as they may well have been) misinterpreted in that sense. In De quant. an. xx, 34, Augustine speaks of the soul at birth bringing knowledge with it (*omnes artes secum attulisse videatur*), and connects this with the identification of learning and recollection. The passage is polemical in tone: Evodius finds in an infant's ignorance and helplessness a possible difficulty in accepting the soul's eternity, for eternity implies a certain perfection of soul incompatible with its apparent development in the growing child (cf. the example of language, xviii, 31); in reply, Augustine stresses that the soul discovers knowledge within itself (*artes:* cf. xxxiii, 72). In so doing, he inclines towards the Platonic formulation. Retr. I,

existence is acceptable: but he is led to criticize *anamnesis* in the light of his own views about the relation of *νοῦς* to its objects. Strictly speaking, his critique would make pre-existence irrelevant to the theory in which *anamnesis* is reduced to a realization of the mind's consubstantiality with its objects. Philosophically irrelevant, that is: but for Plotinus, who wanted only to be the interpreter of the master, Plato (V 1, 8, 10ff.), an impossibility irreconcilable with piety. Moreover, as we have seen, he believed in the eternal existence of souls and in reincarnation. What is fascinating is that he virtually contemplates the 'correction' of his notion of the relation of *anamnesis* to our knowledge of intelligibles in the very manner adopted by Augustine.[1]

viii, 2 shows that he later found it necessary to defend himself against the charge of implying that soul pre-existed (*aliquando vixisse*). He does so by maintaining that soul knows *ea . . . quae sola intelligentia capit* by reason of its natural contact (*natura intelligibilis est, et connectitur non solum intelligibilibus verum etiam immutabilibus rebus*) with the intelligible world. The soul's pre-existence is adduced at De lib. arb. III, xx, 57 as no more than a hypothetical possibility, and Augustine in no way implies that he would accept it.

[1] I should like to thank Professor Willy Theiler for reading and commenting on the first draft of this paper.

DID ST. AUGUSTINE EVER BELIEVE IN THE SOUL'S PRE-EXISTENCE?

ROBERT J. O'CONNELL, in a recent article,[1] has argued strongly that Augustine in his early writings of the years 386-389 defended the theory of the human soul's pre-existence. In so doing, he is following in the footsteps of earlier scholars, in particular J. Hessen, E. Gilson and F. Körner.[2] However, he is less hesitant in his conclusions than his predecessors, with the possible exception of Hessen, and in another respect his arguments differ from theirs: "if", he writes, "the early Augustine defended both reminiscence and the pre-existence of the soul, the likelihood is that he held those doctrines as he came to understand them from Plotinian Neo-Platonism, and not as Plato himself presented them".[3] The purpose of this paper is to examine these claims, to look closely yet again at the relevant texts in the generally accepted chronological order of their composition.

Contra Academicos 2.9.22; *Retractationes* 1.1.3.

Augustine is speaking of the soul's search for truth which, once found, will enable it "quasi in regionem suae originis rediens . . . securior rediturus in coelum". In the *Retractatio* he says that he should

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[1] 'Pre-existence in Augustine's Seventh Letter', *Revue des études augustiniennes* 15 (1969) 67-73.

[2] J. Hessen, *Die Begründung der Erkenntnis nach dem heiligen Augustinus*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters 19.2 (Münster 1916) 55-62 and *Augustins Metaphysik der Erkenntnis* (2nd ed. Leiden 1960) 53-59; E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine* (London 1961) 71-72 and notes; F. Körner, 'Die Entwicklung Augustins von der Anamnesis- zur Illuminationslehre', *Theologische Quartalschrift* 134 (1954) 397-447.

[3] *Op. cit.* 69. Körner, *op. cit.* 410, speaks of Plotinus' adaptation of the Platonic theory of "reminiscence" and its possible influence on Augustine, but the idea is not developed. Cf. G. Söhngen, 'Die neuplatonische Scholastik und Mystik der Teilhabe bei Plotin', *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 49 (1936) 98-120. In this connection, Plotinus, *Enneads* 4.3.25.24-33 is interesting. There Plotinus argues that, strictly speaking, we cannot say that the mind "remembers" its inalienable contents: the actualization of the latter by the higher, intellectual phase of the soul is what the ancients meant by "reminiscence".

have written *iturus* for *rediturus* to avoid implying that embodiment is a fall or punishment of the soul: this is consistent with Augustine's later, well-attested repudiation of this view.[4] Significantly, however, he does not recant the word: the origin of the human soul is obscure, and he can justify his language by references to *Ecclesiastes*, St. Paul and Cyprian. It is a traditional Christian manner of speaking of the soul's dependence upon its Creator, and of the eschatological nature of life.[5] It is also a Plotinian "metaphysical metaphor":[6] but even if Augustine is influenced by Plotinus' language here, we cannot infer that he subscribes to Plotinian doctrines of the soul's pre-existence and fall. The metaphorical nature of Augustine's own language is underlined by his introduction of the phrase with the qualifying *quasi*. No positive conclusion therefore about an Augustinian belief in pre-existence can be drawn from this deliberate metaphor: nor does the *Retractatio* suggest that Augustine felt that he must criticise anything more than the words used.

De beata vita 1.1.

Augustine is employing the elevated style common to the *praeloquia* of several of his dialogues. The theme and metaphorical language are strikingly similar to those of the *C. Acad.* passage just discussed: Augustine speaks of the "beatae vitae regionem solumque", of men being launched into the world "veluti in quoddam procellosum salum", and of the voyager's difficulty in knowing "quo sibi nitendum esset quave redeundum". As in the previous passage, the motifs of "source" and "return" function as images both of the soul's dependence upon its cause and of the fact that life has a transcendental end or purpose. Significantly, Augustine mentions a number of possible causes of embodiment—"sive Deus, sive natura, sive necessitas, sive voluntas nostra, sive conjuncta horum aliqua, sive simul omnia"—thus anticipating a later similar "open" discussion at *De libero arbitrio* 3.20.55-21.59. Each of these possible causes, except the first, would necessarily imply pre-existence, but Augustine shows no inclination to opt for any one: indeed he admits the difficulty of the problem ("res enim multum obscura est"). The ensuing dialogue does not go into the question.

4 Cf. especially *De civitate Dei* 11.23.

5 Augustine says as much: "ita dixi, *in caelum*, tamquam dicerem, ad Deum, qui eius est auctor et conditor . . . Sine controversia ergo quaedam originalis regio beatitudinis animi, Deus ipse est", *Retr.* 1.1.3.

6 Cf. P. Henry, Introduction to Stephen MacKenna's translation of Plotinus' *Enneads* (3rd ed. London 1962) lxvi-lxvii.

Soliloquia 2.20.35; *Retractationes* 1.4.4.

Speaking of the "bene disciplinis liberalibus eruditi", Augustine says that these men "by learning elicit and, in a certain sense, disinter (eruunt discendo, et quodammodo refodiunt) the knowledge buried in forgetfulness in themselves (in se oblivione obrutas)". He goes on to stress that certain types of knowledge (the example of geometrical figures is given) cannot be derived through the imaginative faculty (*phantasia*). In interpreting this passage one must emphasize that it comes at the conclusion of the *Soliloquia*, in the course of which Augustine has clearly developed his *illuminatio* theory:[7] it must, therefore, be read in that unequivocal context. The attendant difficulty of seeing the passage as implying pre-existence has been noted by both Gilson and Bardy.[8] O'Connell makes the valid point that, for Plotinus, there is no inconsistency in maintaining simultaneously an "illumination" theory and a "reminiscence/pre-existence" one.[9] However, Plotinus does so explicitly,[10] whereas Augustine, faced with the difficulty of accounting for the soul's possession of *intellegibilia*, postpones the discussion, presumably until *De quantitate animae*. The use of the term *oblivio* in the passage under analysis cannot guarantee any adherence to a pre-existence theory: Augustine must find a way of speaking about the mind's access to innate, *a priori* truths and the fact that such truths have to be "actualized" by thought. The Platonically-influenced language of "reminiscence" is conveniently at hand, is used again with a consciousness of its symbolic nature ("*quodammodo* refodiunt"), and no more implies pre-existence than does Augustine's similar use of *memoria* in the *Confessions*.[11] Finally, when Augustine comments on the passage in *Retr.*, his "hoc . . . improbo" may refer to the way in which he has expressed himself: he does not suggest that he ever subscribed to

7 *Sol.* 1.6.13, 1.8.15, 2.19.33. Cf. also *De ordine* 2.14.41.

8 Gilson, "Augustine clearly teaches the doctrine of illumination in the *Soliloquia* . . on this point he could not have contradicted himself in the same work. Besides, he seems to allow the full explanation of the difficulty to stand over (*Soliloq.* 2.20.36; *PL* 32.904)", *Christian Philosophy* 71 n. 12; cf. G. Bardy, *Les Révisions*, volume 12 of the *Bibliothèque Augustinienne* edition of Augustine's works (Paris 1950) 144.

9 *Op. cit.* 69.

10 Illumination: *Enneads* 5.3.17.36, 5.5.7-8, 6.7.23.1. Reminiscence: *Enn.* 1.8.15.28, 3.5.1.34-40, 3.7.1.22, 4.7.12.9. For further passages see W. Theiler, "Ueberblick über Plotins Philosophie und Lehrweise", *Plotins Schriften* VI (Hamburg 1971) 135.

11 *Conf.* 10.10.17-11.18. Cf. the term *recordata* in *Retr.* 1.8.2.

the "reminiscence" theory, merely that the *illuminatio* theory is "more credible".

De immortalitate animae.

O'Connell has elsewhere shown that this treatise is heavily indebted to Plotinus, *Enneads* 4.7.[12] If Augustine were explicitly admitting of the pre-existence doctrine, one might expect to find reference to it here, of all places: Plotinus himself refers to it at 4.7.12.8-11 and 4.7.13. But there is no mention of it in *De imm. an.* In 4.6 Augustine speaks of "the so-called forgetfulness or ignorance (oblivio vel imperitia nominatur)" of the soul: the context refers to the phenomenon of latent knowledge, which can be actualized or "found in the soul (in animo nostro invenimus)". In other words, to speak of *oblivio* is, to some extent, incorrect:[13] the soul eternally possesses eternal truths. In 6.10 the presence of truth to the soul is stressed ("non id posset contemplari animus per seipsum, nisi aliqua conjunctione cum eo"), and this present link, rather than any past intellection in a prior existence, is emphasized. The interdependence of *disciplina* (or *ratio*) and the soul in 1.1 is not adduced to show that the human soul has no beginning (God's eternal existence could, for example, guarantee the permanence of *disciplina*), merely to demonstrate, as does 6.11, that, *once granted* the existence of soul, its relation to *ratio* is such that it cannot perish. In fact, Augustine seems to avoid having to talk about pre-existence in this treatise by making the soul dependent upon *veritas* for its being, 11.18: he does not say that *veritas* (to be identified with God, 13.22) "creates" the soul, but the necessity of positing the soul's pre-existence *qua* self-subsistent entity is thereby removed.

De quantitate animae 20.34; *Retractationes* 1.8.2.

Augustine here speaks of the soul bringing knowledge with it at birth ("omnes artes secum attulisse videatur") and identifies learning with recollection ("reminisci et recordari"). The passage is polemical: Evodius finds infant ignorance and helplessness possible reasons for questioning the soul's eternity, for eternity implies a certain perfection of soul. Augustine's reply stresses that the soul discovers knowledge

[12] *Saint Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 386-391* (Cambridge, Mass. 1969) 135-145.

[13] Similarly, we can speak of the soul's *mutatio* only in a limited sense, *ibid.* 5.7-9.

within itself, that, as Evodius himself later admits, "scientia insita est nobis" (26.50), a truth exemplified in Evodius' own progress towards understanding under Augustine's guidance. To say that the soul has brought knowledge with it need imply no more than that certain types of knowledge are innate, *a priori*: it need not exclude the creation of the soul by God, for example. Similarly, given the obvious indebtedness of the treatise's concept of knowledge to ideas already developed in *Sol.* and *De imm. an.*, there is no compelling reason to assume that the equation of learning with recollection here implies more than do the references to *oblivio* in those treatises. Finally, when Augustine comments on the passage in *Retr.*, he is clearly criticising only the words used, as Gilson remarks.[14]

De libero arbitrio 1.12.24, 3.20.55-21.59.

In the first passage, Augustine speaks of the "great mystery (grande secretum)" of whether the soul, prior to its embodiment, lived in some other life, and whether it lived then in a state of wisdom ("aliquando sapienter"). The question is postponed, and taken up again in the second passage, which, despite its later date,[15] may conveniently be discussed here. It mentions four possible theories concerning the soul, of which the third and fourth imply its pre-existence: but of the four, says Augustine, "we must not affirm any one of these rashly (nullam temere adfirmare oportebit)". Scriptural commentaries have apparently not yet solved the obscure perplexities of the question, he adds. In other words, Augustine can speak of pre-existence as a hypothetical possibility without in any way implying that he would accept it. Significantly, when he discusses the consequences of the pre-existence theories for the soul, he does not mention Platonic "reminiscence" or offer it as an "explanation" of the presence of the *notiones impressae* discussed in Book 2 of the work: the soul is seen as bringing with it "the power of good works . . . the way to faith . . . the power of [moral] judgement" in traditional Christian and Biblical terms (20.57).

De magistro 12.40.

Augustine, speaking of mental concepts, says "praesentia contuemur in illa interiore luce veritatis, qua ipse, qui dicitur homo interior,

[14] "It seems impossible to interpret the passage retracting the text of the *De quantitate animae* as anything more than the retraction of an expression", *Christian Philosophy* 71 n. 12.

[15] Cf. *Retr.* 1.8.1.

inlustratur et fruitur". The passage repeats and reinforces the *illuminatio* doctrine, aspects of which have been noted in *Sol.* 1.8.15 and *De imm. an.* 6.10 above: the *presence* of truth and knowledge to the soul, rather than any past "acquisition" of knowledge, is stressed.

Epistola 7.

The analysis of this letter is the main purpose of O'Connell's paper, but as he assumes that most of the texts discussed above are "indices" of Augustine's belief in the soul's pre-existence, it seemed necessary to look at them in detail.[16] If *Ep.* 7 is read as the culmination of a series of more or less explicit suggestions that the soul pre-exists, it may seem convincing: but if, as we have seen, no positive assertion of pre-existence emerges from the other texts, *Ep.* 7 becomes a puzzling, isolated text, unique in its apparently unequivocal affirmations. With the major part of O'Connell's analysis one can only concur, and his conclusion that Augustine's argument is "to justify using the term *memoria*, there *must* be reference to the past"[17] is undeniably right. Augustine distinguishes formally between the "pastness" of the act of apprehension and of the object apprehended in order to dispose of an objection to the Platonic theory of "reminiscence", which, he argues, implies only the former, Ep. 7.2, adding that "illam visionem esse praeteritam, quia haec aliquando mente vidimus". Taking the example of our notion of eternity—which, to controvert Nebridius' assertion that there can be no memory without imagination (*phantasia*, *Ep.* 6.1), he argues "does not require any image . . . by which it may be introduced into the mind"—he can conclude "nec tamen in mentem venire posset, nisi eius meminissemus". The latter phrase is, in itself, no problem: it could be a use of *memoria* similar to that in *Conf.* 10.10.17-11.18. But the earlier phrases "visionem . . . praeteritam" and "aliquando . . . vidimus" seem to refer to a past experience. O'Connell admits that this is a "vague text" and tries to reinforce it by reading further in the letter. He suggests that the explanation Augustine offers of why we must use memory to recall ideas, *defluximus* (*Ep.* 7.2), is "one of the classic images Plotinus uses for the 'fall' of the soul".[18] Can we, however, be certain that the word is used by Augustine in this sense? Does the "de-" in *defluximus* necessarily imply descent, or not rather simply the notion that we have "moved on" from ideas to other activities, i.e. that they need to be "re-activated" in us because we have "forgotten" them? This, as we have seen, is a typically Augustinian *façon de parler*: it is like the "so-called forgetfulness or ignorance" of the soul at *De imm. an.* 4.6. To argue this is not to solve all the problems in the passage under discussion, but it is a reason for hesitating to import a Plotinian interpretation without further cause.

[16] In particular, it should be noted that *De mag.* was written in the same year as *Ep.* 7 (389).

[17] *Op. cit.* 71. To this extent his criticism of R. A. Markus' interpretation of the letter in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge 1967) 370 is justified. However, Markus suggests correctly that "this knowledge [which we learn by reasoning] is not really derived from *past experience*", *ibid* (italics mine).

[18] *Op. cit.* 72.

O'Connell adduces other passages from *Ep.* 7 in support of his thesis that his is "the most natural explanation" of the text. Three of these passages (there are five in all) cannot refer, as O'Connell would have it, to "a 'past' bearing all the earmarks of a Plotinian pre-existence".[19] In the first passage, Augustine is speaking of Nebridius' theory that the *anima* can form images of *material* things independently of sense-perception: the argument begins, "If the mind is able, before it uses the body as its instrument in perceiving material objects, to form to itself the images of these (Si anima priusquam corpora utatur ad corpora sentienda, eadem corpora imaginari potest)", *Ep.* 7.3. This is clearly a hypothesis, the major premiss of a syllogism whose conclusion, Augustine goes on to show, is absurd: to italicize "before", and suggest that the passage implies "Plotinian pre-existence", as O'Connell does, is surely inadmissable. Augustine is referring to images of *phantasia*, which, he stresses, are notoriously *less* reliable even than those derived from sense-perception proper. In the fourth passage adduced by O'Connell, Augustine is simply saying that, if he were to accept Nebridius' argument, he would have to believe that the mind is *a priori* subject to the illusions of *phantasia*: he maintains that, on the contrary, all illusions ultimately derive from sense-experience (*Ep.* 7.6). The sense, therefore, of "the soul, while *not yet* using the bodily senses (nondum corpore sentientem) and *not yet* rudely assaulted (nondum per sensus . . . verberatam)"—*Ep.* 7.5, italics again O'Connell's—is similar to that implied in the "before" of the previous passage. There is no suggestion that "not yet" refers to a prior state of the soul's existence. In the fifth passage (*Ep.* 7.7), Augustine is concluding his argument in similar language: "I do not think that it [the mind] is capable of any such impressions [images formed independently of sense-perception] before it uses the body and the senses (. . . sensibilium cogitatione formarum, quas eam, priusquam corpore sensibusque utatur, nullo modo arbitror pati posse)". This passage cannot be used to infer that there ever actually has been such a state of the mind.

[19] *Ibid.*

The second and third passages are, however, problematical. Firstly, in *Ep.* 7.3, "if, as no sane man can doubt, the mind received more reliable and correct impressions before it was involved in the illusions which the senses produce ([si] melius, quod nemo sanus ambigit, affecta erat antequam his fallacibus sensibus implicaretur)". Then, in *Ep.* 7.5, "were it not manifest that the mind is less liable to illusions when it has not yet been subjected to the deceptive influence of the senses (nisi manifestum esset animam minus esse obnoxiam falsitatibus, nondum passam sensibilium sensuumque vanitatem)". These texts undoubtedly refer to a state of the mind independent of sense-experience: we are familiar, from the passages in the dialogues discussed above, with what Augustine means. It is the mind's state when it has direct contact with *intellegibilia* (*De mag.* 12.39). Must the language Augustine uses here refer to a prior existence of the soul? We have seen that Augustine, in this letter, can use terms like "before" and "not yet" to refer to the mind's supposed formation of images *independently* of sense-impressions:[20] that is, "before" means "not subsequent to" in the sense of "not caused by". The difficulty of Nebridius' theory, as Augustine sees it, is that it suggests that the activity of the soul called *phantasia* is similar to the activity whereby immaterial truths are intelligized. Augustine refers to the latter activity in the same temporal "before-and-after" language that he uses for the former. But, just as in the case of *phantasia* it would be ridiculous to claim that Augustine was referring to an activity prior to the soul's embodied existence, so it is inadmissable to imply that, in the case of intellection, Augustine must be referring to pre-existence. His choice of language—particularly "visionem . . . praeteritam" and "aliquando . . . vidimus"—is potentially ambiguous,[21] but a strict analysis of his usage of such terms in the letter does not suggest anything more than a way of speaking about *a priori* knowledge, and one similar to that found elsewhere in the early Augustine.

Augustine, therefore, does not appear to be defending a Plotinian viewpoint in *Ep.* 7. On the contrary, it is Nebridius who, intentionally or not, represents a Neoplatonic doctrine in some of his arguments. For the notion that it is the imaginative faculty which recalls intellections by means of an image acting as a cipher is found in Plotinus and Porphyry.[22]

[20] Cf. *Ep.* 7.3: (of dreamers and the insane) "his enim afficiuntur imaginibus, quibus ante istos sensus vanissimos nuntios afficiebantur".

[21] When Augustine uses such language to refer to Platonic pre-existence and reminiscence theories he is much more explicit, cf. *Retr.* 1.8.2. on the view that "animam . . . aliquando vixisse; et ea quae interrogata respondet, cum hic non didicerit, in alia vita ante didicisse".

Conclusion

It cannot be asserted that the early Augustine ever believed in the human soul's pre-existence. He was aware of the problem of the soul's origin, and even in later life never assumed that it admitted of an easy solution.[23] Pre-existence is one possibility among others, but it is never necessarily implied, still less explicitly adduced, as an accepted explanation either of the soul's immortality or the mind's access to truth. On the other hand, the Platonic language of *memoria* and *oblivio* is utilized as an expression of the mind's innate possession of knowledge, often latent and requiring activation.

[22] Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.3.30, suggests that the cipher may be the *logos* which accompanies the thought, cf. Nebridius' view in *Ep.* 6.1. For Porphyry, see *Sententiae* 16 (ed. B. Mommert 5.10-14). The notion is, of course, already found in Aristotle, *De anima* 427b15; *De memoria* 449b31.

[23] Cf. *Retr.* 1.1.3: "nec tunc sciebam, nec adhuc scio". Gilson puts it thus: "Augustine never says anywhere that the soul exists before the body . . . he never rejects as certainly false the notion that the soul may exist before the body", *Christian Philosophy* 71.

V

Time as *Distentio* and St. Augustine's Exegesis of *Philippians* 3,12-14

When Augustine, in the eleventh Book of the *Confessions*, describes time, somewhat hesitantly, as a *distentio animi*, he cannot be offering a *definition* of time[1]. He is using the metaphor *distentio* to evoke whatever accompanies or follows upon the cognitive act of measuring time[2]. The distinction is fundamental, and failure to observe it has often obscured the connotations of *distentio* in Augustine. Thus, through anxiety to understand it in a definitional or quasi-definitional sense, the word is translated " extension " and explained as the equivalent of a Greek term from philosophical discussions of time—whether διάστημα or διάστασις, παράτασις or ἔκτασις[3]. This explanation is misleading, for a number of reasons. First, there is no evidence or indication that Augustine is translating or adapting a Greek discussion of time : therefore *distentio*

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1. *Conf.* 11, 23, 30 : « uideo igitur tempus quandam esse distentionem » ; *ibid.* 26, 33 : « inde mihi uisum est nihil esse aliud tempus quam distentionem : sed cuius rei, nescio, et mirum, si non ipsius animi. » Both forms, *distentio* and *distensio*, will be found in texts cited *infra*. Cf. art. *Distentio* in *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* 5, 1, cols. 1516, 58 — 1517, 72. — H. M. LACEY, *Empiricism and Augustine's Problems about Time* in *Review of Metaphysics* 22 (1968), p. 219-45, argues convincingly that Augustine was not looking for a definition of time.

2. Cf. R. JORDAN, *Time and Contingency in St. Augustine*, in *Review of Metaphysics* 8 (1954-5), p. 414 : « Time is a relation, with a foundation in successive states of finite or limited being, whose measurement is a cognitive act terminating in the ' distentio ' of the mind. »

3. The Stoics defined time as κινήσεως διάστημα, *SVF* 1, 93 ; 2, 509-10. When Plotinus speaks of time and the Hypostasis Soul, he says that " the spreading out (διάστασις) of life involves time ", *Enneads* 3, 7, 11, 41 (tr. A. H. Armstrong). ἔκτασις occurs at *Enn.* 3, 7, 6, 25. For other instances of ἔκτασις and παράτασις and some discussion of all these terms, see W. BEIERWALTES, *Plotin, über Ewigkeit und Zeit* (*Enneade* III 7), Frankfurt, 1967, p. 207-8, p. 265-7. J. F. CALLAHAN'S attempt, in *A New Source for St. Augustine's Theory of Time* in *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 63 (1958), p. 437-54, to see in Basil, *Adv. Eunom.* 1, 21 a source of Augustine's *distentio* is unconvincing.

need not be a translated term. Second, Augustine's views about the nature of time are not really clarified by speculation about the definitional force of *distentio*—more light is thrown on them by consideration of the role of memory and *attentio* in perception[4]. Finally, if we explain *distentio* as " extension " we must assume that in *Conf.* 11, 29, 39 Augustine alters the meaning of the term to what may be called a moral sense, because there it means " distraction ". But the question should at least be raised whether such an alternation in meaning has occurred. There can be no denying that *distentio* in *Conf.* 11, 29, 39 conveys the sense of temporality as fragmentation and dispersal : the context, and other words used in the chapter (*dissilui, dilaniantur*), make this clear. Might it not be the case that this experiential and consciously metaphorical meaning of the word determines Augustine's use of it elsewhere, including the two earlier instances in his account of time, and that its primary meaning, for him, is not " extension " ? The purpose of this paper is to argue for this possibility.

It will be appropriate to begin with a brief history of the word *distentio*. It is not a common word, and its use in non-Christian authors is confined to medical treatises, where it means a tension, a nervous spasm or convulsion, or a distortion, and is a translation of the Greek σπάσμα, σπασμός or τέτανος[5]. Other non-Christian authors appear to avoid it, using an equivalent term instead : thus Pliny the Elder speaks of " sufflatae cutis distentus " (*Nat. Hist.* 8, 138). Christian authors extend its usage. It can refer to the tension in the bowstring or the string of the lyre, as when Augustine mentions " in cithara neruos distentos ", adding, " diuersa distensio diuersos edit sonos " (*Serm.* 243, 4)[6]. It can also be used of spatial extent or masses, particularly in rhetorically high-flown passages : " omnis ornatus caeli, omnis fecunditas terrae, diffusio maris, distentio aeris, fulgor siderum, claritas solis et lunae » (*Enarr. in ps.* 44, 4). So God is described as " ubique praesentem, et non spatiis distantibus, quasi aliqua mole vel distensione diffusum, sed ubique totum » (*Ep.* 187, 41)[7]. A further usage is illustrated in Paulinus of Nola : " distentio corporis animae sobrietatem necat " (*Ep.* 50, 13 = Augustine, *Ep.* 121, 13).

4. On memory's role in our perception of duration see *De musica* 6, 8, 21 and *Conf.* 11, 27, 36-28, 38. Cf. É. GILSON, *Introduction à l'Étude de Saint Augustin*, 3rd ed., Paris, 1949, pp. 85-6, 253-4 ; A. SOLIGNAC's note in *Les Confessions* VIII-XIII (*BA* 14), Paris, 1962, p. 590.

5. CELSUS, *De medicina* 2, 1, 18 : « propriae.... dentientium... neruorum distentiones » ; SCRIBONIUS LARGUS, *Comp.* 26 : « dolores cum rubore et distentione oculi sicca » ; *Ibid.* 89 : « terna (sc. catapotia) uel quaterna in noctem dare ad inflationes in ipsa distentione ».

6. *Cf.* AUGUSTINE, *Enarr. in ps.* 149, 8 : « in tympano corium extenditur, in psalterio chordae extenduntur... nerui quanto plus fuerint extenti, tanti acutius sonant ».

7. *Cf.* also *De Trin.* 5, 1, 2 : « molis distensionem ».

The most striking Christian use of the word, however, is as a translation of περισπασμός in Latin versions of *Ecclesiastes* and later texts influenced by that work. Thus *Eccles.* 3, 10 is rendered " deus distensionem magnam dedit hominibus, ut distendantur in ea " in the *Itala*. Similarly, *Eccles.* 5, 13 is translated in the *Itala* as " pereunt in summa distentione ac sollicitudine ". In both these cases the Vulgate substitutes *afflictio* for *distentio*, but Jerome can also use *occupatio*, and seems to have felt no compunction to use one single Latin word, accepting *occupatio* at *Eccles.* 8, 16, for example, in his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, but using *distentio* in the same passage in his translation. When Jerome explains the translation *distentio* he says : " eo quod in uarias sollicitudines mens hominis distenta lanietur " (*Comm. on Eccles.* 1, 13). Here he is echoing a usage of *distentus* well attested in classical authors, and meaning " preoccupied, busy, distracted ". The comic poet Afranius writes " nunc est distentus animus ut negotiis " (fr. 73 Ribbeck). Cicero complains to his brother Quintus " distentus cum opera tum animo sum " (*Q. fr.* 3, 8, 3), and writes to Atticus " cum intellego te distentissimum esse qua de Buthrotiis qua de Bruto " (*Att.* 15, 18, 2). Pliny can speak of Trajan as " distentus imperi curis " (*Pan.* 86, 2). Although the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* suggests that these uses may be of the past participle of *distineo*[8], one cannot be certain, and, in any case, the Jerome passage quoted shows that late Latin authors at least would relate *distentus* to *distentio* and certain uses of *distendo*. Furthermore, even in pre-Christian Latin it is often impossible to distinguish between the meaning of *distendo* and *distineo* in passages of Cicero, Livy, Seneca or Pliny[9]. Usage overrides etymology here, imposing a shared meaning " distract " or " strain by distraction " on the words in question.

Distentio in the sense found in *Ecclesiastes*, to refer to the cares and concerns of the *saeculum*, occurs in Cassian, who writes of *mundanae distentiones, cotidianae distentiones*[10]. Here the meaning clearly is " preoccupations or distractions causing anxiety ". The word has the same force as *distentio* in *Confessions* 11, 29, 39. Clearly Augustine is employing a Christian metaphor, even if there is no explicit use or echo of *Ecclesiastes* in his words. Elsewhere he uses the words related

8. Similarly, J. GIBB - W. MONTGOMERY, *The Confessions of Augustine*, Cambridge, 1908, p. 362, on *Conf.* 11, 29, 39, seeing a possible allusion there to *Eccles.* 8, 16, suggest that *distentio* = « distraction » may derive from *distineo*, whereas *distentio* = « extension » derives from *distendo*. L. ALICI, *La funzione della 'Distentio' nella dottrina agostiniana del tempo*, in *Augustinianum* 15 (1975), p. 328, n. 7, makes wild assertions about the etymology of *distentio* : its relation to *distineo* as a « military technical term » (for which no evidence is given) cannot be demonstrated.

9. E.g. LIVY 9, 12, 10 : « *distendit* ea res Samnitium animos » ; SENECA, *Nat.* 4a, praef. 2 : « infelicem animum nunc superbia inflamus, nunc cupiditate *distendimus* » ; CICERO, *Planc.* 79 : « *distineor* et diuellor dolore » ; *Livy* 9, 16, 6 : « duae factiones senatum *distinebant* » ; PLINY, *Pan.* 68, 2 : « securus tibi et laetus dies exit, qui principes alios cura et metu *distinebat* ».

10. E.g. CASSIAN, *Conl.* 7, 3, 3 ; 14, 9, 3 ; 24, 13, 4.

to *distentio* in the senses noted above. Thus he asks " nonne diuersae uoluntates *distendunt* cor hominis, dum deliberatur, quid potissimum arripiamus ? » (*Conf.* 8, 10, 24). Or, contrasting man's temporality with God's eternal unity and unchangeability, " neque enim sicut nota cantantis notumue canticum audientis expectatione uocum futurarum et memoria praeteritarum uariatur affectus sensusque *distenditur*, ita tibi aliquid accidit inconmutabiliter aeterno » (*Ibid.* 11, 31, 41). Or, " dedita temporalibus uoluptatibus anima... multiplici atque aerumnosa cogitatione *distenta*... talis anima multiplicata est » (*Enarr. in ps.* 4, 9).

Augustine does not use *distentio* and related words in isolation. He uses these words as part of a group of evocative terms to emphasize the fragmentary, disunited and distracting condition of temporality. One such term is *effundo* : " uolentes enim gaudere forinsecus facile uanescunt et *effunduntur* in ea quae uidentur et temporalia sunt " (*Conf.* 9, 4, 10). Another word is *multiplico*, which occurs in the *Enarr. in ps.* 4, 9 passage just quoted, and is itself an echo of *Ps.* 4, 7 : this can be seen in " nec uolebam *multiplicari* terrenis bonis deuorans tempora et deuorata temporibus, cum haberem in aeterna simplicitate aliud *frumentum et uinum et oleum* " (*Conf.* 9, 4, 10) as well as in " temporalium.. specierum mutiformitas ab unitate Dei hominem lapsum per carnales sensus diuerberauit et mutabili uarietate *multiplicauit* eius affectum " (*De uera rel.* 21, 41), where *Ps.* 4, 7 follows at once. In the case of *multiplico* we have a good example of the way in which the vocabulary of a Scriptural passage forms Augustine's language of temporality and becomes an adequate expression and enrichment of his experience of the human condition. We shall soon see a further illustration of this, for Augustine, characteristic process.

Further members of this group of evocative words used by Augustine are *dissilio*, *dilanio*, and *(in)gem(isc)o*. *Dissilio*, which can literally mean " burst apart ", as in Virgil, *Aen.* 12, 740-1 " mortalis mucro... ictu /dissiluit ", is a vivid metaphor, used by Augustine in a moral sense : " turpis anima et *dissiliens* a firmamento tuo... dedecus appetens " (*Conf.* 2, 4, 9). Augustine describes his psychological condition after Monica's death : " sauciabatur anima et quasi *dilaniabatur* uita " (*Ibid.* 9, 12, 30). Finally, when saying that he will withdraw from externals and enter into himself, he writes that he will " *gemens* inenarrabiles *gemitus* in peregrinatione mea et recordans Hierusalem extento in eam sursum corde " (*Ibid.* 12, 16, 23). And man, he says, lives by hope, " quae retro oblitus, in ea, quae ante sunt, extenditur, et *ingemescit* grauatus " (*Ibid.* 13, 13, 14). Significantly, of these terms, *gemitus* (" anni mei in gemitibus "), *dissilio* (" in tempora dissilui ") and *dilanio* (" tumultuosis uarietatibus dilaniantur cogitationes meae ") all occur in *Conf.* 11, 29, 39, where, together with *distentio*, they illustrate Augustine's use of a related verbal nexus.

Now in the passages from *Conf.* 12, 16, 23 and 13, 13, 14 quoted in the preceding paragraph the words *extento* and *extenditur* evoke man's " strai-

ning towards " the promise of the heavenly Jerusalem. They are positive terms, the expression of faith and hope. In both passages there is a clear verbal echo of a Scriptural text—*Philippians* 3, 14. The *Philippians* text is also central in *Conf.* 11, 29, 39, where phrases of vv. 12-14 occur. There, too, the word *extentus* is found, and it is the positive complement of *distentus*, and the counterpart of *intentio* : " non distentus, sed extentus, non secundum distentionem, sed secundum intentionem ". Just as in the case of *Ps.* 4, 7 the *Philippians* text contributes to Augustine's language of temporality and conditions it. If we turn to other occasions when Augustine quotes or echoes this text[11], we see that it recurs as a leit-motif when he broaches the theme of man's calling to the eternal and liberation from the temporal, the reaction of faith to the disturbing fragmentation of temporality[12]. In the so-called Ostia vision it evokes the *ascensio* of Augustine's and Monica's souls : " et praeterita obliuiscentes in ea quae ante sunt *extenti* quaerebamus inter nos... qualis futura esset uita aeterna sanctorum » (*Conf.* 9, 10, 23). And (*Ibid.* 25) " sicut nunc extendimus nos et rapida cogitatione attingimus aeternam sapientiam super omnia manentem ". In *De doctr. christ.* 1, 34, 38 Paul is called *extentus*, it is said, to teach us " ne rebus temporalibus... haereamus infirmiter ". Elsewhere *extentus* emphasizes the anticipatory state of the Christian in this life : " non se diceret extentum, si iam peruenisset. Extenditur enim animus desiderio rei concupitae, non laetitia consecutae " (*Enarr. in ps.* 39, 3). Or " in ea quae ante sunt extenti, quae appetitio est aeternorum " (*Enarr. in ps.* 89, 5). These themes are forcefully expressed in the following passage :

> « praeterita non nos delectent, praesentia non nos teneant... ne praesentibus implicemur a futura meditando ; *extendimus* nos in ea quae ante sunt, obliuiscamur praeterita. Et quod modo laboramus, quod modo *gemimus*, quod modo suspiramus, quod modo loquimur, quod ex quantulacumque parte sentimus, et capere non possumus, capiemus, perfruemur in resurrectione iustorum " (*Enarr. in ps.* 66, 10).

Finally, in *Sermo* 255, 6, 6, the themes are developed at length, with much emphasis on the contrasts *distentus /extentus*, *distentio /extentio* (*intentio*) in exegesis of the *Philippians* text. Augustine shows care in his distinction between the positive, Pauline term and the pejorative one : " unum nos extendat, ne multa distendant et abrumpant ab uno "

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11. G. MADEC, *Léon Brunschvicg et Saint Augustin*, in *Recherches Augustiniennes* 6 (1969), p. 151, n. 36, lists several occurrences of *Philipp.* 3, 11-14 in Augustine.

12. F. E. CRANZ, *The Development of Augustine's Ideas on Society before the Donatist Controversy*, in *Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954), p. 298, 291-2, notes in passing Augustine's use of *Philipp.* 3, 12-14 in statements of this theme, mentioning (*ibid.* 291 n. 125) some passages.

(*loc. cit.*)[13]. When he uses *distendo* and *distentio* he does so advisedly, here and elsewhere. The associations of disease, distortion, distraction, anxiety are decisive. Just as he can express the amazing, almost grotesque life of the memory by calling it *uenter animi* (*Conf.* 10, 14, 41)—adding that, although it would be *ridiculum* to suppose that the memory and the digestive processes were alike, " nec tamen sunt omni modo dissimilia "—so he can call the phenomenon of time-consciousness a *distentio animi*, the distressing experience of " deuorans tempora et deuoratus temporibus " (*Conf.* 9, 4, 10). Even those uses of *distentio* which might seem reducible to " extension " prove, on examination of their context, to have more colourful, dramatic undertones. *Distentio* is used of time in *Enarr. in ps.* 99, 5, when Augustine evokes the magnitude and life of the *uniuersa creatura*, in the same rhetorical vein in which he speaks of the " diffusio maris, distentio aeris " at *Enarr.* 44, 4. When he says of the *caelum caeli* that " nulla uice uariatur nec in tempora ulla distenditur " (*Conf.* 12, 11, 12) the surrounding language is once again emotionally charged and enthusiastic in tone : *distendo* is a lively word, as in " nolo te per multa distendas " (*C. Cresconium* 3, 82, 94). If the reading *distentiones* at *De vera rel.* 40,75 is correct[14], it would be suitably vivid in that context of *dolores*, *morbi* and *distortiones membrorum*.

Augustine finds *Philipp.* 3, 12-14 a fruitful text for a number of reasons. First, the phrase *unum autem* in v. 14, which he mistakenly construes with *sequor*[15], allows him to refer to the unity/plurality contrast basic to his understanding of time and eternity. He can make similar use of the phrase *unum... necessarium* in *Luke* 10, 42, and of the *Ps.* 62, 4 passage quoted at the beginning of *Conf.* 11, 29, 39 : " melior est misericordia tua super uitas ". In his exegesis of this passage he will explain why the Psalmist uses the plural *uitas* : " multae sunt uitae humanae, sed Deus unam uitam promittit... unam uitam donas, quae praeponatur omnibus nostris " (*Enarr. in ps.* 62, 12).

13. At *Enarr. in ps.* 113, *sermo* 1, 7, 14, Augustine uses *extendo* in a pejorative sense : " in saeculum extenditur ". But here he is speaking of a pre-conversion state, cf. the Pauline passage, *ibid.* 10-11. A. RIGOBELLO, *Intentio — Extensio — Distentio : Modello ermeneutico della Antropologia Agostiniana*, in *Scritti in onore di Carlo Giacon*, Padova, 1972, p. 141, expresses well the usual contrast in Augustine : « il tempo della *distentio*, della dispersione, del puro divagare di immagini e concetti senza pervenire a vera conoscenza » contrasts with « il tempo della *intentio-extensio*, della unificazione della coscienza nei suoi aspetti morali e conoscitivi ». ALICI, *art. cit.* (*supra*, n. 8) expands some of Rigobello's points, discussing different levels of meaning of *distentio*, but without close analysis of Augustine's vocabulary. The same lack of interest in Augustine's use of language is apparent in other work on *distentio*, e.g. M.-F. SCIACCA, *Forme e Momenti del tempo secondo i livelli della libertà. La ' distentio ' agostiniana*, in *Augustinus* 13 (1968) [= *Strenas Augustinianas P.V. Capánaga oblatas*, 2], p. 397-407 ; P. DE HAES, *Tijd als ' distentio animi ' Nota's bij een tekst van S. Augustinus*, in *Collectanea Mechliniensia* 41 (1956), p. 615-621.

14. Cf. *CC* 32 A, p. 236, 19 and *apparatus criticus*. At *Conf.* 12, 15, 22 *distentio* is grouped with such terms as *vices temporum*, *spatium aetatis volubile*, *vicissitudo temporum*.

15. For his mistake, see *Sermo* 255, 6, 6. The Greek ἓν δὲ, translated in the *New English Bible* " All I can say is this ", was properly translated by MARIUS VICTORINUS : « unum adhuc tamen », *Lib. ad Philipp.* 3, 13-14 (1221 C-D ; p. 104, 4 ff. Locher).

A second reason for Augustine's repeated echoing of the *Philipp.* passage is the phrase in v. 14 which his translation renders *secundum intentionem*[16]. The role of *intentio* or *attentio*, a *uis animae* essential to perception, is stressed by Augustine in early treatises and persists into the later *De trinitate*[17]. It has been argued that it may be a translation into Neoplatonic terms of the Stoic account of cognitive perception[18]. Whether or not this is so, *intentio* is for Augustine an indispensable activity of the immaterial soul's consciousness. In discussing our awareness of duration in *Conf.* 11, 28, 38 he will use the related concept of *attentio*. But he can also employ the term *intentio* in the sense of " contemplation ". In the famous passage in *Conf.* 10, 6, 9, where he questions the created world and it tells him " non sumus deus tuus ", he seeks higher and finds God through understanding the world as His handiwork : " interrogatio mea *intentio* mea et responsio eorum species eorum ".

Finally, as has been shown above, the *Philippians* passage provides Augustine with the term *extentus*, a positive counterpart to *distentus* and *distentio*[19]. His meditation in *Conf.* 11, 29, 39 has a Scriptural nucleus : the phenomenon is not isolated in Augustine. Often the words of a Scriptural text which he admires become almost technical terms for him : the text evokes the idea and is a means of expressing and developing it. Such is the case with *Idipsum*, *primitiae spiritus* or *Romans* 1, 20 in *Confessions* alone[20]. In these examples it is possible to see a Pauline-Neoplatonic synthesis, but with *extentus* we are on simpler ground. Here Augustine's reading, sensibility and experience combine to evolve a theme with deep Scriptural roots. He will turn to the word *distentio* because it is a strong, fresh and novel term, adequate to his awareness of temporality[21].

16. The Greek κατὰ σκοπόν is translated " ad destinatum " in the Vulgate. It clearly means " towards the goal ".

17. *De an. quant.* 33, 71 ; *De musica* 6, 5, 10 ; *De Trin.* 11 *passim*, 12, 2, 2.

18. Cf. J. ROHMER, *L'intentionnalité des sensations chez Saint Augustin*, in *Augustinus Magister* 1 (Paris, 1954), p. 491-498.

19. The quite exceptional nature of Augustine's exploitation of the Pauline text is shown by comparison with less personal, generalized uses of the same text in e.g. TERTULLIAN, *De resurrect. mort.* 23, 7-9 ; *De pudicit.* 6, 2 ; *Ad uxor.* 1, 3, 6 ; MARIUS VICTORINUS, *Lib. ad Philipp.* 1220 C - 1222 C, p. 102, 17 - 105, 13 Locher.

20. For *Idipsum* see SOLIGNAC, *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 4), p. 550-2. For *primitiae spiritus* see J. PÉPIN, « *Primitiae spiritus* ». *Remarques sur une citation paulinienne des « Confessions » de Saint Augustin*, in *Rev. de l'Hist. des Relig.* 140 (1951), p. 155-201, and SOLIGNAC, *op. cit.*, p. 552-5. On *Rom.* 1, 20 see P. COURCELLE, *Recherches sur les Confessions de saint Augustin*, 2nd ed., Paris, 1968, p. 162-5, p. 175-8.

21. A version of this paper was read to a symposium on Late Roman Studies at Lancaster University on 30 October 1976. I am grateful to the Director of the *Thesaurus Linguae Augustinianae* at Eindhoven/Holland for valuable information.

AUGUSTINE ON THE MEASUREMENT OF TIME: SOME COMPARISONS WITH ARISTOTELIAN AND STOIC TEXTS

Augustine's discussion of the phenomenon of time in the eleventh book of his *Confessions* has been compared with Aristotelian, Plotinian and Greek Patristic texts,[1] but there appears to have been no attempt to relate it either to some interesting remarks of Aristotle in his little treatise *De memoria*, or to one further ancient philosophical theory of time, that of the Stoics. This may be because the Stoic theory is known to us only from fragmentary evidence,[2] and Aristotle's extended treatment of time in *Physics* IV.10–14 lends itself better to comparative study than the *De memoria* passages. It seems none the less worthwhile to compare Augustine with these Aristotelian and Stoic texts—not in order to prove that they are sources for Augustine's views (although Stoic influences on Augustine are both frequent and always inherently probable[3])—but because what we know of these Greek views on time throws light on, and is in turn illuminated by, Augustine's discussion.

Although Augustine suggests at the beginning of his discussion that he is inquiring into the nature of time itself, or asking the question "to what do temporal terms refer?" (*quid autem familiarius et notius in loquendo commemoramus quam tempus? . . . quid est ergo tempus? Conf.* XI.14.17),[4] he does not give an answer to this question, or a *definition* of time, in the course of his investigation.[5] In fact, his initial question is modified and re-formulated from the start. He notes that we speak of long and short time periods: we presume to estimate and compare time-spans (15.18). The problem therefore is one of how we can *measure* time: how can a time-period have length, and how do we know its length? It will be helpful to set out Augustine's answer, and analyse it, stage by stage, and to compare each stage with a corresponding element in the Stoic theory of time, where this is known (this is the case in stages [A] to [F]), or with the Aristotelian texts (as in [H]).

(A) Both Augustine and the Stoics assume that time is an infinitely divisible continuum. Augustine's language in 15.20 seems momentarily to suggest the alternative possibility of a minimal present time which is indivisible, a "time-atom" (*si quid intellegitur temporis, quod in nullas iam vel minutissimas momentorum partes dividi possit, id solum est, quod praesens dicatur*), but he immediately undermines this possibility by remarking that the present cannot be extended (*nam si extenditur, dividitur in praeteritum et futurum: praesens autem nullum habet spatium*). An indivisible minimum time is, however, necessarily extended, and so cannot constitute a present. In 27.34 Augustine is more explicit: passing time is extended over a certain measurable period, but at any given instant it has no actual measurable extent. Elsewhere, as in *De musica* VI.8.21, Augustine unequivocally asserts that time, like space, can be divided infinitely by our reason.

(B) Augustine draws an erroneous conclusion from (A) inasmuch as he asserts that only the present "is" (in the sense of "what now is"),[6] despite being extensionless and having no duration. He thereby suggests that "now" is a point or part of time, albeit durationless, and he fails to see that the division of an extended entity will always result in extended entities.[7] He is less subtle than Aristotle, for whom "now" is not a part of time but a mathematical limit marking a distinction of before and after in movement.[8] The Stoic Archedemus of Tarsus seems to have followed Aristotle here in his assertion that "now" is "a kind of juncture and connexion of what is past and of what is coming on".[9] The Stoics are generally more circumspect than Augustine in their talk of the present. Although, like him, they argue that "only what is present exists (*huparkhein*)", they do so with reservations. Strictly speaking (*kat' apartismon*), one should not call any time present: one may talk "loosely (*kata platos*)" of the present.[10] This is a recognition that what we mean by "present" is a specious present which is, in fact, infinitely divisible into past and future. When the Stoics give an example of how the present may be said to exist they refer to the conditions under which a proposition about a contingent fact can be verified. For example, the temporally indefinite sentence "I am walking" is true when, and only when, I *now* walk: by analogy, moment X exists when it *now* "is".[11] As Sandbach remarks, this example does not clarify the sense in which the present is real: the Stoics confound "what is (now)" and "what is true".[12] Augustine inherits this Greek conceptual presupposition.[13]

(C) For Augustine, the past and the future do not exist (in the specialized sense of existing *now*), but past and future are present in memory and expectation respectively. One may have access to past or future events: they are objects of intellectual perception and therefore "are" in some way (17.22: *nam ubi ea viderunt qui futura cecinerunt, si nondum sunt? neque enim potest videri id quod non est. et qui narrant praeterita, non utique vera narrarent, si animo illo non cernerent: quae si nulla essent, cerni omnino non possent. sunt ergo et futura et praeterita.*). Augustine goes on to explain the mode of such presence. Past events are present in the images derived from sense-perception (18.23); future events are more complicated, but we must assume that the presence of their "signs" or "causes" allows us to anticipate or predict them (18.24). It follows from what Augustine says that he will criticize talk of three grammatical tenses.[14] We should, he argues, strictly speaking talk only of three *present* tenses, when we refer to past, present and future events (20.26). To talk of three tenses in the conventional way is to talk "loosely" (*non proprie*). This may remind us of the Stoic distinction in (B) above between what is in strict logic the case, and what language loosely suggests to be the case. But even more strikingly similar is the Stoic agreement that past and future are present in a special way: they "subsist" (*huphestēkenai*), whereas only the present "exists" (*huparchein*).[15] The Stoics, too, will criticize popular, untechnical ways of talking about tenses. Since "a present sign is a sign of something present" past and future tenses of verbs refer to the present of whatever they signify, and so are, strictly speaking, present tenses. Thus it is technically correct to say that a wound is a sign that somebody "*is* having-been-wounded" (not "has been wounded"), or that a heart wound is a sign that X "*is* about-to-die" (not "will die").[16] Augustine's talk of *praesens de praeteritis* and *praesens de futuris* appears to make the same point.

(D) For Augustine, time is measured in the mind (27.36: *in te, anime meus, tempora metior*). The Stoics would appear to agree in so far as they include time among the incorporeals, thus considering it to be an object of thought rather than a material component of the external world.[17] Aristotle may also suggest that there would not be time if there were not soul.[18] To call Augustine's theory of time "psychological" is, therefore, not to indicate its novelty in the ancient philosophical tradition: that description can possibly be applied to Aristotle, for whom time, defined as the (potentially) numerable aspect of movement,[19] appears to entail an enumerating mind. The Stoic view of time as incorporeal is also "psychological": "Time like

lekta has no independent existence but is rather something which rational beings make use of in order to explain the movements of bodies".[20]

(E) Augustine says that we measure time when we measure duration (*spatium temporis, mora*). Duration may be the duration of change or movement, but Augustine takes great care to demonstrate that our ability to make temporal measurements is prior to, and independent of, any observed physical movement. In this context the argument in 23.30 deserves attention. It is a reply to the *homo doctus* of 23.29 who identifies time with the movement of the heavenly bodies. A temporal term like *dies* does indeed refer to the sun's orbit: Augustine therefore asks whether *dies* is to be defined as (a) the movement of the sun itself, or (b) the duration of the movement, or (c) both of these. Janich argues convincingly that (a) and (b) cannot be mutually exclusive, but must be complementary: otherwise (c) would not be an admissable alternative to (a) and (b).[21] If that is so, then Augustine's argument would appear to be as follows. In (a) solar revolution *qua* movement is regarded as defining *dies*, whether that revolution takes one hour or twenty-four hours. In (b) the normal twenty-four duration of solar revolution is presupposed, and it is assumed that this gives us a standard unit of time (like the marked unit on a clock). Now, if a solar revolution were to last only one hour, *dies*, by definition (b), would still be defined as twenty-four hours, i.e. the time unit called *dies* would be a quantified duration derived from normal solar revolution but independent of any changes, real or hypothetical, in the latter. In (c) the definition of *dies* is made dependent on both solar revolution and its observable normal duration.

What is Augustine's purpose in rehearsing these alternatives? It must be more than a *reductio ad absurdum* of the views of the *homo doctus*: its complexity suggests a further purpose. Now, immediately after this section, Augustine abandons his investigation of the defining characteristics of *dies*. He turns back to consideration of time in general, and away from the specific time unit *dies*. Time, he argues, is duration, but not necessarily the specific duration of solar movement: when the sun is said in a Biblical passage (*Ios*. X.12f.) to have stood still, time *qua* duration still passed: *sol stabat, sed tempus ibat*. Augustine is clearly not denying the relation of the temporal unit *dies* to the sun's revolution. What he asks is, what does this relation tell us about time? In particular, what does it tell us about our ability to measure and compare time periods? And his answer

seems to be: it tells us *nothing* about all this. We can hypothesize cessation of solar or celestial movement: we could still measure other movement or change, or simple duration. We seem to have a "time sense" that can be applied to movement in order to measure its duration, but is independent of movement. Augustine cannot accept alternatives (a)–(c) because all three presuppose a necessary astronomic clock, or a standard time unit derived from an astronomic clock, in order to explain our consciousness of time. Time in 23.30 is shown to be irreducible to conventional or observable time units. Whatever the precise relation of the unit *dies* may be to solar movement (and Augustine does not clearly choose from alternatives [a]–[c]), the equation of time with movement by the *homo doctus* fails to distinguish between time *qua* measurable duration or change and time *qua* time unit.[22]

The Stoics, like Aristotle, will avoid a simple equation of time and movement: for them, time is the "interval" (*diastēma*) of movement, it "accompanies" (*parakolouthoun*) the universe's movement.[23] Thus, while they agree with Augustine that time and movement must be kept distinct, they will, like Plato,[24] regard cosmic movement as the standard clock, providing a universally common human time. Augustine, as we have seen, need not disagree with this, provided it is made clear that we are talking about time units and not about "time sense".

(F) Augustine considers time to be the measurement of a relation (24.31: *quod si diu video* ⟨sc. an observed movement⟩, *tantummodo longum tempus esse renuntio, non autem, quantum sit, quia et quantum cum dicimus, conlatione dicimus, velut "tantum hoc, quantum illud" aut: "duplum hoc ad illud" et si quid aliud isto modo*). We do not, however, measure time as it passes: Augustine seems to maintain that we do so at 16.21 (*sed praetereuntia metimur tempora, cum sentiendo metimur*) and 26.33, but 27.34 refutes this view, for what "is" passing time? It tends towards some extent, but at any given present moment it is extensionless. Nor can we give the length of any process while it is going on, but only after it has ceased, or we have arbitrarily ceased to observe it (24.31). Thus Augustine is led to the hypothesis that it cannot be the processes themselves that we measure, but "something in the memory" (27.35), the *affectio* which remains after perceptions (27.36). Similarly, in the case of future processes, we can measure them by anticipation (*expectatio*) when we possess the necessary experience or knowledge to enable us to make advance calculations. Augustine's examples here in 27.36 and

28.37–8 are limited to anticipation of pre-meditated utterances or known songs: presumably, however, he would say that we can likewise calculate the time of other future processes where anticipation is based on knowledge (for example, if similar processes have occurred in our past experience). In this respect therefore, memory becomes as essential to calculations of future events as it is to the measurement of processes which have ceased.

We have no specific Stoic text to compare with these views of Augustine's. However, the view that time is a relation dependent on the measurer's view-point finds an echo in the Stoic distinction between time as an infinite duration and partial (presumably "present" in the "loose" sense) time *qua* the least time that sense-perception can appropriate.[25] There are no known Stoic views on whether we measure time as it passes.

(G) Augustine askes whether direct temporal comparisons with a standard unit of measurement are possible (26.33: *metior motum corporis tempore. item ipsum tempus nonne metior?*), but seems to deny that they are.[26] He takes the example of a song which consists of sub-units of specific verses, feet and syllables: do we measure its parts in the same way that we can measure spatial magnitudes with a rule? What he concludes is that while we can speak of inner *relations* between a song and its parts, no unit of the song gives us a time unit in any absolute sense; for long and short syllables, verses, etc. can be so pronounced that they take a varying amount of time. Here Augustine's view seems to be substantially the same as, for example, Locke's.[27]

(H) Augustine does not explain in the *Confessions* how memory (see [F] above) measures temporal magnitudes, but in *De musica* VI.8.21 he devotes some attention to this. Memory is essential to hearing even the shortest syllable, because the latter is temporally extended and so cannot be simultaneously perceived *in toto*. Just as in the case of sight rays emitted from our eyes enable us to see spatial magnitudes,[28] so memory (*quasi lumen temporalium spatiorum*) "takes in" temporal magnitudes. Memory plays the same role in any observation of solids, which we can only perceive part by part in succession. Memory in this context seems to follow instantaneously upon perception: a passage in the great *Genesis* commentary confirms this. The mind forms an image in itself of a perceived body, *cuius imago mox ut oculis visum fuerit, in spiritu videntis nullius puncti temporalis interpositione formatur* (*De Gen. ad litt.* XII.16.33). The example of hearing which follows in this passage shows that Augustine is talking of memory.

Augustine's views here may be interestingly contrasted with Aristotle's in his *De memoria*: "Nor does he [sc. the percipient] acquire memory from the start, for once the state or affection has been produced within a person, then there is memory. So memory is not produced within someone at the same time that the experience is being produced within him . . . remembering itself does not occur until time has elapsed. For a person remembers now what he saw or experienced earlier. He does not remember now what he experienced now".[29] As Sorabji points out, Aristotle seems to be arguing that since one can perceive a period as well as an instant, the present can be said to have duration and to include experiences which one has just had but which cannot yet be objects of memory.[30] Aristotle's views would seem to lead him to a different conclusion from that of Augustine: he might argue that one cannot estimate the absolute length of a short duration through memory (for it is only just past and so belongs to the present), but through a sensation which, as in William James's specious present, gives its apparent duration.[31] For Augustine, however, the perception of the passage of time while it is passing involves such intellectual processes as image-forming and remembering: his logical scruples will lead him to deny that what is past can in any sense be present to perception, or that the concept of a specious (and so extended) present, accessible to sensation, is tenable.

In summary, we may say that while no explicit testimony proves his dependence on Stoic views of time, much less on Aristotle, Augustine considers traditional problems, and sometimes gives traditional answers, in his discussion in *Confessions* XI. He can make philosophical blunders, as when he assumes that infinite division will result in an extensionless, durationless present (A), but he can also display considerable acumen, especially in his analysis of the relationship between time sense, duration and movement (E). Augustine's greatest originality lies in his insistence on the indispensable function of memory in all time calculation (F, H).

NOTES

1. See especially the writings of J. F. Callahan: *Four Views of Time in Ancient Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1948); "Basil of Caesarea: A New Source for St. Augustine's Theory of Time", *HSCP* 63 (1958), 437–454; *Augustine and the Greek Philosophers* (Villanova, 1967),

74–93. Also A. Solignac in *Les Confessions* VIII–XIII. Bibliothèque Augustinienne 14 (Paris, 1962), 584–591, and J. Guitton, *Le temps et l'éternité chez Plotin et saint Augustin*[3] (Paris, 1959), 232–235.

2. The best discussion is in V. Goldschmidt, *Le système stoïcien et l'idée de temps*[3] (Paris, 1977), 30–45. See also S. Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics* (London, 1959), 98–108; J. M. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1969), 273–288; F. H. Sandbach, *The Stoics* (London, 1975), 92–93.

3. See especially G. Verbeke, "Augustin et le stoïcisme", *Rech. Aug.* 1 (1958), 67–89; J. Pinborg, "Das Sprachdenken der Stoa und Augustins Dialektik", *Class. et Med.* 23 (1962), 148–177; R. J. O'Connell, "*De Libero Arbitrio* 1: Stoicism Revisited", *Augustinian Studies* 1 (1970), 49–68; J. Pépin, *Saint Augustin et la dialectique* (Villanova, 1976), especially 72–98.

4. Passages from *Confessions* XI are subsequently cited by chapter and paragraph numbers only, e.g. 14.17.

5. See H. M. Lacey, "Empiricism and Augustine's Problems about Time", *Rev. Metaph.* 22 (1968), 219–245. For reasons why Augustine's description of time as *distentio* cannot have definitional force see my article "Time as *Distentio* and St. Augustine's Exegesis of *Philippians* 3, 12–14", *REA* 23 (1977), 265–271.

6. 18.23: *ubicumque ergo sunt, quaecumque sunt, non sunt nisi praesentia.*

7. Contrast e.g. Locke's view: "Every part of duration is duration too, and every part of extension is extension, both of them capable of addition or division *in infinitum*". (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. J. W. Yolton [London, 1961], I.165) Augustine's error is noted in the illuminating article of P. Janich, "Augustins Zeitparadox und seine Frage nach einem Standard der Zeitmessung", *Arch. Gesch. Phil.* 54 (1972), 168–186, especially 173–174.

8. See Aristotle, *Phys.* 222a10–222b7. For a discussion of Aristotle's "now" see P. F. Conen, *Die Zeittheorie des Aristoteles*. Zetemata 35 (Munich, 1964), 62–116.

9. Plutarch, *Comm. Not.* 1081E (transl. H. Cherniss) = *SVF* III, p. 263, 31–37.

10. *SVF* II, frag. 509, p. 164, 23–26.

11. For these points see *SVF* ibid. 22–30.

12. Sandbach (above n. 2), 93.

13. For a discussion of this phenomenon in Greek thought see J. Hintikka, "Time, Truth and Knowledge in Aristotle and Other Greek Philosophers", in *Time and Necessity: Studies in Aristotle's Theory of Modality* (Oxford, 1973), 62–92.

14. Augustine's criticism is influenced by the fact that *tempora* ambiguously means both "times" and "tenses", 17.22; 20.26.

15. *SVF* II. p. 164, 26–27; p. 165, 32–43. For a convincing discussion of the distinction between *huparkhein* and *huphestēkenai* see A. A. Long, *Problems in Stoicism* (London, 1971), 89–93; for the modern controversy over these terms see Goldschmidt (above n. 2), 247–248.

16. *SVF* II, p. 73, 24–39.

17. *SVF* II, frags. 331, 335, 520, 521.

18. *Phys.* 223a21–9: see Conen (above n. 8), 156–169.

19. A definition which "expresses ... the possibility of enumerating change", Sambursky (above n. 2), 100.

20. A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy* (London, 1974), 138.

21. Janich (above n. 7), 178–184.

22. Augustine himself explicitly makes this distinction in *De civ. Dei* XII.16, where he speaks of hours, days, months and years as *dimensiones temporalium spatiorum* derived from the motion of heavenly bodies, and contrasts them with the time which is indicated *in aliquo mutabili motu, cuius aliud prius, aliud posterius praeterit*, independently of the existence of the heavens.

23. *SVF* III, p. 164, 15–18; *ibid.* 32–37 and frags. 510–516.

24. Plato, *Tim.* 38B6–39E2.

25. *SVF* II, p. 164, 18–22; Posidonius, frag. 98, 9–12 (Edelstein-Kidd) = *Dox. Graec.* p. 461, 19–21.

26. Lacey (above n. 5), 222, 233, mistakes Augustine's question in 26.33 for an affirmative statement on the possibility of direct temporal comparisons.

27. Locke (above n. 7), I. 151: "we cannot keep by us any standing, unvarying measure of duration, which consists in a constant, fleeting succession, as we can of certain lengths of extension, as inches, feet, yards, etc., marked out in permanent parcels of matter".

28. See also *De an. quant.* XXIII.43.

29. Aristotle, *De mem.* 451a23–25, 29–31, transl. R. Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory* (London, 1972), 53.

30. See *De mem.* 449b13–15 and Sorabji, 66, 91.

31. Sorabji, 18–21, discussing the implications of *De mem.* 452b7–22. For the specious present in William James see his *The Principles of Psychology* (New York and London, 1907), I. 605–642 (I owe the reference to R. Sorabji's notes, which cite the 1890 edition).

ANIMA, *ERROR*, AND *FALSUM* IN SOME EARLY WRITINGS OF ST AUGUSTINE

Augustine's discussions of sense-perception are part of a sustained attempt to understand the interaction of body and *anima*.[1] In particular (for Augustine is a realist rather than an idealist in this respect), he wishes to give an analysis of our perceptions in terms of subject (the *anima* using the five corporeal senses), act (sensation – *sensus* or *sentire*), and object sensed (which he usually assumes to exist independently of the act of perception). In this paper I propose to consider a set of problems which tantalize Augustine in his earliest writings, those concerned with our errors of judgement concerning sense-perception. I shall not be considering Augustine's possible sources (in fact, I believe his discussion merits attention as a piece of philosophical analysis in its own right) or any attempted 'solution' of his problems in his later writings, such as *De Genesi ad litteram*.[2] What I wish to do is to observe closely Augustine the philosopher at work on a dilemma. The passages to be discussed come from *Contra Academicos*, *Soliloquia*, and *De Immortalitate animae*.[3]

In the discussion of error in *C. Acad.* 1 Augustine is not specifically concerned with sense-perception, but a definition of error is offered that will reappear in other texts: 'falsi pro uero approbatio, the approbation as true of what is false'.[4] In book 3 of the same work this definition is briefly applied

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[1] This paper was presented to the Eighth International Conference on Patristic Studies, held in Oxford in 1979. For convenience, the term *anima* is used throughout, as there is no need, within the scope of this article, to distinguish between its meanings 'soul' and 'mind'. For comment on Augustine's use of *anima, animus, mens* and related terms see E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'Étude de Saint Augustin*, 3rd edn. (Paris, 1949), 56-57.

[2] Especially *De Gn. litt.* 12.25.52, recently discussed by B.S. Bubacz, 'Augustine's "Visio Intellectus" and Perceptual Error', *Augustiniana* 27 (1977), 133–138.

[3] Hereinafter abbreviated as *C. Acad.*, *Sol.*, and *Imm. an.*

[4] *C. Acad.* 1.4.11: the speaker is Licentius. In this paper no attention is paid to the dialogue form of *C. Acad.* and *Sol.*, as Augustine's ideas can be abstracted without distortion from the dialogue. Trygetius has already offered another definition in 1.4.10 – 'errare est utique semper quaerere, numquam inuenire' – but it is easily rejected: it does not cover simple mistakes about

to perception. In all perceptive acts something 'appears to be', whether it is objectively or apparently the case: error occurs only if we rashly judge this appearance to be what it is not; if, for example, we judge an illusory world to be real.[5]

Augustine calls the illusions of the insane and the contents of dreams *falsa*, false, that is, from the common-sense viewpoint of the sane or those who are awake, who can judge the 'appearances' to be, or to have been, unreal. But dream images will continue to puzzle Augustine, for they are as persuasive to the dreamer as perceptions of the real world are to those awake. Augustine suggests that the senses do not cause the *falsa* of dreamers or the insane, but for the totally inadequate reason that the same senses give true reports under 'normal' conditions.[6] He will later realize that this argument cannot hold, though his subsequent remarks make it clear why he maintains it in this context. For he goes on to approve of the Epicurean view that the senses are infallible and that all sense-perceptions are therefore 'true'. Even recognized optical illusions are true, and have some (unspecified) cause independent of the percipient. Of course, perceptions are 'true' in this respect only in a trivial sense: and if optical illusions are 'true' why cannot dream images be similarly true? In fact, Augustine's Epicurean will assent to no more than the proposition that the perception is such-and-such: 'noli plus assentiri, quam ut ita tibi apparere persuadeas'.[7] And this perception appears to be of secondary qualities only,[8] and to be relational: taste in itself (supposing it to exist), as opposed to somebody's sensation of taste, cannot be determined. Yet, Augustine adds, we can talk of knowing (*scire*) such sense-contents – though he reveals the inadequacy of his preceding argument by adding 'sed me tamen illud in somniis etiam delectaret (sc. the taste)'.

This short discussion leaves basic questions unanswered: how, if at all, can I distinguish between real and illusory appearances? Doesn't the Epicurean viewpoint – so baldly stated – make all sense-perceptions equally 'true'?

matters of fact, and it unsatisfactorily involves calling prolonged, if unconsummated, progress towards the truth an error.

[5] *C. Acad.* 3.11.24.
[6] *Ibid.* 3.11.25.
[7] *Ibid.* 3.11.26.
[8] For a useful discussion of the uses of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities in Locke and Descartes see B. Williams, *Descartes: The Project of Pure Enquiry* (Harmondsworth, 1978) 237–247.

In *Soliloquia* Augustine returns to these problems, and the first part of his discussion both clarifies certain ambiguities in the term used and undermines the crypto-idealism of the *C. Acad.* argument.[9] For to the latter's psychological definition of error as 'falsi pro uero approbatio' corresponds the objective definition in *Sol.* of falsum as 'quod aliter sese habet quam uidetur, what is other than it appears to be'. And analysis of this definition shows that it entails that *falsum* depends upon a percipient, that *falsitas* is not *in rebus* but *in sensu*. The *C. Acad.* passage purported to assert the contrary, but that is inadmissable, given the definition of error proposed: 'aut operatur igitur anima, aut cooperatur falsitati'. At the same time, Augustine exposes some of the complexity behind such apparently uniform terms as *falsum, falli, falsitas*. He can speak in abstract terms of the *falsitas* in sensation(s), and by distinguishing between false impressions (*falsa*) and assent to these, he can maintain that we need not be deceived (*falli*) by *falsa* if we withhold assent or are aware that they are false. The attentive reader will note that this point is based on the realist distinction between subject (*nos*) and act (*sensus*):[10] a distinction which harmonizes ill with the paragraph's idealist argument.

One advantage of the idealist approach, however, is that it focuses attention on two meanings of *falsum*. We can assert that a proposition is 'false' without any 'mistake' on our part: here *falsum* is a simple mark of denial. But something which deceives (a false impression) can also be *falsum* in the sense of 'what is other than it appears to be'. Here *falsum* is thought of as a quality inhering in something.

Augustine now[11] illegitimately attempts to objectify or hypostasize the concept of *falsitas*. There will always be truth and error: therefore the *anima*, whose existence (it has has been argued) is a necessary condition of truth and error,[12] must always exist. This cannot stand up. Admitting that truth and error will always occur involves one in saying no more than that whenever human existence takes its present known form instances of truth and error will be observable. As Augustine subsequently says, a succession of temporally overlapping mortal *animae* would satisfy the condition of truth's and error's sempiternity.[13]

[9] *Sol.* 2.3.3.
[10] *Ibid.*: 'conficitur ut aliud simus nos, aliud sensus: siquidem, cum ipse fallitur, possumus nos non falli'.
[11] *Sol.* 2.3.4.
[12] *Sol.* 2.1.1.–2.2.
[13] *Sol.* 2.4.5.

This argument illustrates one of a number of underlying assumptions or conceptual presuppositions which define the trend of the discussion,[14] and departure from which causes Augustine concern. These assumptions are: (A) the world exists unperceived;[15] (B) existence, or being 'real', is an attribute; (C) 'true' is not a relational term. Unless we accept that Augustine's discussion moves within these confines, we shall not appreciate its progress. Together, these assumptions will reduce to absurdity the idealist definition of error, as we shall now see.

To begin with assumption (B). In applying it, Augustine uses *uerum* in a misleadingly ambiguous way.[16] Here is the sequence:

(i) No X is a body if it is not a *uerum* body.
(ii) No X is *uerum* unless it is what it appears to be.
(iii) Whatever is what it appears to be is perceived.
(iv) The proposition 'X is *uerum*' is equivalent to the proposition 'X is perceived'.

Now (i) is only the case if *uerum* = 'real', and this is the sense which, in the context, is most acceptable. But in (ii) *uerum* is used in the sense it has in the preceding discussion, i.e., 'true' as opposed to 'false'. 'Real' and 'true' are not, however, equivalent terms, for both 'true' and 'false' can be predicated of something 'real'. In fact, Augustine later refers to this,[17] and momentarily compares 'true/false' with another relational pair, 'large/small'. But the illegitimate transfer from *uerum* = 'true' to *uerum* = 'real' stifles this comparison. If nothing is 'uerum per se' it follows that nothing exists *per se*: but this infringes assumption (A). And conversely, we might add, if nothing exists *per se* nothing is 'uerum per se', in the sense of *uerum* = 'true'. But this goes against assumption (C).

The definition of *uerum* is now revised to purge it of these idealist elements and their unacceptable consequences, but what emerges is a tautology: *uerum* is 'id quod est'.[18] Moreover, *falsum* is thereby rendered meaningless, for whatever exists is *uerum*, in the sense of 'real' (if not of

[14] For a penetrating discussion of the role such (often tacit) presuppositions play in Greek philosophy see J. Hintikka, 'Time, Truth, and Knowledge in Aristotle and other Greek Philosophers', in *Time and Necessity: Studies in Aristotle's Theory of Modality* (Oxford, 1973), 62–92.

[15] See *Sol.* 2.5.7.–8.

[16] *Sol.* 2.4.6. Cf. already *Sol.* 1.15.28–29: 'si ... arbor est, uera sit necesse est'.

[17] *Sol.* 2.5.8.

[18] *Ibid.*

'true'). Common sense, however, cannot accept that *falsum* refers to nothing: a new definition of error must be sought.

The new definition again shows that, like Descartes, Augustine is determined to see error, not as a negation, but as a privation.[19] Error is not blank ignorance: in fact, it will now be defined as that which has 'aliquam similitudinem ueri', it represents in some sense a failure to be true.[20] This definition will in turn founder, but not before valuable distinctions have been made between what we might call the contexts of *falsa* (the *in quibus* of error).[21] Thus *falsa* can occur in the experience of the *anima*, as in optical illusions (where the error is in the sensation, or the sense's act), or in dreams and hallucinations (where the *falsum* is in the internal working of the *anima* upon the material furnished it by the senses).[22] But as well as being a psychological condition *falsitas* can be in objects, as in mirrors or imitative paintings. It is, however, precisely this diversity that undermines the new definition of error. For in determining that mirror images, for example, are *falsa* we note the absence of certain perceptible features usual in 'real' objects (tangibility, sound, etc.). Here *dissimilitudo* rather than *similitudo* appears to determine *falsitas*. But if we apply the same criterion to dreams they cannot be called false, so much can they resemble reality.[23] Both *similitudo* and *dissimilitudo* appear to be inadequate criteria of falsity: in fact, Augustine concludes that if used as criteria, whether singly or together, they would force the conclusion that everything is *falsum*, since everything can be said to be in some sense similar and dissimilar to other things.[24] But the conclusion that everything is false is as unacceptable as the earlier one that nothing is false.

Augustine's next definition of *falsum* is thus given as an attempt to succeed where the others have failed. In fact, it does not succeed either, though once again it includes a useful distinction. The false is (a) 'quod ... se fingit esse quod non est, what contrives to be that which it is not'; (b) 'quod omnino esse tendit et non est' or (better) 'id quod esse tendunt non possunt', 'what strives to be and is not' or 'what fail to be what they try to be'.[25] Clearly (a) is the category of voluntary falsehood, the falsehood of liars, deceivers, comedians, and makers of literary fictions. (b) is the category of

[19] See Williams, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), 164.

[20] *Sol.* 2.6.10.

[21] *Sol.* 2.6.11.

[22] Note how both of these observations are implicit corrections of puzzles about optical illusions and dream images in *C. Acad.* 3.11.25–26.

[23] *Sol.* 2.7.13.

[24] *Sol.* 2.8.15.

[25] *Sol.* 2.9.16.

necessarily false objects, whether mirror images or representational works of art. But does (b), which is the real successor of the earlier definitions, really improve on its predecessors? It seems to avoid subjectivity by not containing any word denoting a psychological act, but it is surely no more than a reformulation of the *similitudo–dissimilitudo* definition. 'X strives and fails to be Y' implies X's similarity to, or dissimilarity from, Y. In fact, Augustine says as much of artefacts: 'nonne illud esse contendunt, ad cuius quidque similitudinem factum est?'[26] The anthropomorphic *(con)tendere* applied to inanimate objects is misleading, and it adds nothing to the definition. Augustine's problems in defining *falsum* thus remain unsolved.

In *De immortalitate animae* Augustine does not add much to the detailed discussion of *Soliloquia*, but a couple of remarks consolidate certain conclusions already reached. In the treatise it is argued that the soul is necessarily immortal as the 'place' of necessary truths. Whether the soul is *essentia* = *ueritas* or is dependent on *essentia*, it is indestructible if it is not destroyed by the contrary of *ueritas*, which is assumed to be *falsitas*. But *falsitas* can do no more than deceive, and its occurrence actually entails an existent soul, the deceived subject. In fact, Augustine continues, *essentia* has no contrary: *falsitas* is therefore not the contrary of *ueritas*.[27] This does not of course imply that *falsitas* cannot in some sense occur; merely that, once again, Augustine is assuming that it is not a simple negation of truth.

Subsequently Augustine argues that dream images suggest that the soul's perceptive powers are unabated in sleep. The soul deals convincingly with images of *sensibilia* in sleep, just as we can think in dreams. Augustine apparently assumes that dream-perception is somehow like sense-perception (or like the exercise of memory).[28] Presumably he is thinking of the type of context of *falsum* referred to in *Soliloquia*, where he speaks of the soul's internal working on the data of sense-experience.[29] However, he can give no account of the soul's exceptional fallibility in dreams.

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[26] *Sol*. 2.9.17. cf. 2.15.29: 'quidquid falsum dicimus non recte dici, nisi habeat ueri alicuius imitationem'; see also 2.16.30 (end of paragraph). On *falsum esse* as a necessary condition of the *uerum esse* of artistic representations see 2.10.18, 2.11.20. Poetry as verbal imitation (*falsa sententia*) of true enunciations: 2.15.29.

[27] *Imm. an.* 11.18–12.19. For the Aristotelian background of the last point see now C.W. Wolfskeel, *De Immortalitate Animae of Augustine*. Text, translation and commentary (Amsterdam, 1977), 121.

[28] *Imm. an.* 14.23. There is no need to assume with Dr. Wolfskeel, *op. cit.* (n. 27), 142, that the *uita propria* of soul in this paragraph implies some equivalent of disembodiment: all Augustine is saying is that the soul's characteristic activities (sensation and thinking) can continue unimpaired in sleep.

[29] *Sol*. 2.6.11.

To conclude: for Augustine, *falsum* connotes a real quality of certain actions and objects. *Falsa* are found *in anima* or *in sensu*, as well as *in rebus*. *Falsa* patently occur: but the definition of *falsum* is complicated, and ultimately made impossible, by the metaphysical status of truth and its relation to the *anima*. For if truth is *essentia* and *essentia* has no contrary, *falsitas* cannot simply be defined as the negation of truth. Yet the other definitions, involving *similitudo* and *dissimilitudo*, demonstrably cannot embrace the variety of *falsa*.

VIII

Sensus interior in St. Augustine, *De libero arbitrio* 2. 3. 25–6. 51

In Book II of *De libero arbitrio* Augustine, in the course of establishing the hierarchy *esse-vivere-intellegere* crucial to his argument for God's existence, gives some attention to problems of sensation and perception. The purpose of this paper is to examine his remarks about the faculty of perceptual synthesis and consciousness, which he calls "internal sense (sensus interior)".[1] I shall begin with a brief analysis of his account of internal sense, before considering some of its antecedents and possible sources and situating it in relation to other discussions of sense-perception in Augustine.

(I) Augustine argues that "there is a certain inner sense to which all things are referred by the five familiar senses".[2] It is common to animals and men. In animals it is observable in their ability to avoid or seek what they have perceived. It controls the senses, and is not knowledge but the necessary medium whereby the data of sensation lead to knowledge. Augustine stresses the distinctions between sensation, internal sense and knowledge, with relevant examples. We know, he argues, the proper objects of the individual senses, e.g. colour in the case of sight, sound in the case of hearing. An animal lacks such discernment, which is made by the reason. On the other hand we are conscious of our sensations and this consciousness cannot be a perception made by the senses themselves: Augustine takes it as self-evident that the senses are not reflexive. He asserts that awareness of the activity or non-activity of the senses is a perception of the internal sense, and he argues for this viewpoint by demonstrating that animals must also possess this awareness – in other words, that it is not a rational awareness. For, he says, such awareness is a necessary pre-condition of movement in animals: "A beast could not open its eye and move it to look at

[1] Adequate translation of the term *sensus interior* is complicated by the fact that *sensus* in Augustine can mean (a) a sense (e.g. sight), (b) sensation, (c) perception. "Internal perception" is perhaps the most accurate rendering, but I prefer "internal sense" because Augustine himself repeatedly contrasts the faculty with the five senses.

[2] *De lib. arb.* 2. 3. 27. The translation of this and subsequent passages is from *On Free Choice of the Will*, by A. S. Benjamin and L. H. Hackstaff (Library of Liberal Arts: Bobbs-Merrill 1964) 42ff. The discussion here summarized is found in 3. 27–37.

what it wanted to see unless when the eye was closed, or when it was not moved, the beast perceived that its eye did not see."[3] The awareness is the impulse (*adpetitus*) which causes the movement, in this case the activation of the animal's sense of sight. Similarly, because it arrests the impulse which led to the sensation, the animal indicates that it is aware that it sees. Augustine adds that internal sense is superior to the five senses because "it controls and, as it were, judges" them.[4] He speculates briefly whether internal sense "perceives itself", as opposed to perceiving the senses and sensations, but concludes that this, though likely, cannot be clearly proved.[5]

(II) In this account Augustine is dealing with some aspects of the so-called κοινὴ αἴσθησις or *sensus communis*.[6] He does not employ the latter phrase here, though it is implicit in his statements that internal sense "controls all the senses in common (omnibus communiter praesidet)" and that "some senses have objects in common (communia)", e.g. the shape of a body is commonly perceptible by sight and touch.[7] The most important discussion of *sensus communis* prior to Augustine is undoubtedly Aristotle's in *De anima*.[8] Aristotle examines the perception of "common sensibles", like shape, the perception that we perceive, and our ability to distinguish between the objects of different senses. His isolation of the functions of common sense is thus remarkably similar to Augustine's, even if his conclusions are radically different. For Aristotle, there is no sixth sense, but sense is a faculty which has generic and specific functions. Hence the "common sensibles" are perceived by this faculty, which also discriminates between the objects of the different senses. Further, the senses are reflexive, for, Aristotle argues, the assumption of a subsidiary sense is both superfluous and involves an infinite regress. A direct influence of Aristotle upon Augustine seems to be out of the question. Augustine knew the *Categories*[9], but cannot have had access either to *De anima* or other Aristotelian texts which deal with problems of perception.

The Stoics, according to a doxographical account, speak of an "internal touching" (ἐντὸς ἁφή) and make it the vehicle of self-consciousness.[10] It is not clear what its relationship is to the governing-principle (ἡγεμονικόν) which recognizes, co-ordinates and judges sense-impressions: it may be

[3] *Ibid.* 2. 4. 39.

[4] *Ibid.* 2. 5. 48.

[5] *Ibid.* 2. 4. 40.

[6] For the concept in Greek philosophy cf. J. I. Beare, *Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition from Alcmaeon to Aristotle* (Oxford 1906) 250–336.

[7] *De lib. arb.* 2. 3. 25–28.

[8] *De an.* 2. 6, 3. 1–2. The best analysis is in R. D. Hicks' edition (London 1907) 422–452.

[9] *Conf.* 4. 16. 28–9.

[10] Aetius, *Placita* 4. 8. 7 (Diels, *Dox. Graec.* 395. 16–19 = *SVF* 2. 852).

identical with it.[11] It would be tempting to look for Stoic influence in Augustine's account, especially as there are Stoic elements in the first Book of *De libero arbitrio*[12], and the Stoic concept of cognitive assent has probably influenced Augustine's account of the role of "attention" in sense-perception.[13] But Augustine is in general anxious to avoid the notion, basic to Stoicism, that sensation is the passive reception of impressions by the soul (whereas the concept of assent was adaptable to his views) and he could not have accepted, even in modified form, the Stoic explanation of the physical transmission of sense-impressions from one bodily part to the next.

It is generally recognized that Augustine's account of sense-perception is Platonic in character, more specifically, that it is influenced by Neoplatonism.[14] I would suggest that it can also be shown that this influence extends to his account of internal sense. Plotinus, in his discussions of the faculties of the sensitive soul (αἰσθητικόν) refers to common sense (κοινὴ αἴσθησις).[15] He does not define it, but he presumably understands it to be a generic faculty of perception. In *Ennead* 4. 3. 26. 1–9 he says that perception is called common because it is a κοινὸν ἔργον of body and soul, but he may not intend us to take this as a definition of κοινὴ αἴσθησις. Some light is thrown on Plotinus' views on sensation at *Enn.* 4. 3. 23, where he describes a single sensitive soul, of which the specific senses are powers (δυνάμεις)[16], and at *Enn.* 4. 7. 6, where he argues that various sensations in the perception of a single object must somehow be unified and co-ordinated by an incorporeal perceptive faculty. At *Enn.* 4. 8. 8. 10 Plotinus speaks of a power of internal perception (τῇ αἰσθητικῇ τῇ ἔνδον δυνάμει) whereby we become conscious of desire. The phrase is reminiscent of Augustine's internal sense. And the purpose of both Plotinus' and Augustine's talk of internal perception is the same, namely, to distinguish between sensation and affections on the one hand, and perception of these on the other. Plotinus is rightly credited with a clearer differentiation between sensation and perception than earlier philosophers.[17] At *Enn.* 1. 1. 7. 5–14, for example, he distinguishes between sensation, directed outside, and the

[11] Cf. Chalcid. *in Tim.* 220 (*SVF* 2. 879); Galen. *De Hipp. et Plat. Plac.* 3. 1 (*SVF* 2. 885).

[12] Cf. R. J. O'Connell, '*De Libero Arbitrio* I: Stoicism Revisited', *Augustinian Studies* 1 (1970) 49–68.

[13] Cf. J. Rohmer, 'L'intentionnalité des sensations chez Saint Augustin', *Augustinus Magister* I (Paris 1954) 491–98.

[14] Cf. E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'Étude de Saint Augustin* (3rd ed. Paris 1949) 76 n. 1. R. H. Nash, *The Light of the Mind: St. Augustine's Theory of Knowledge* (Kentucky 1969) 39–59.

[15] *Enn.* 1. 1. 9. 12.

[16] Cf. *Enn.* 4. 3. 3. 12–16.

[17] Cf. H. J. Blumenthal, *Plotinus' Psychology: His Doctrines of the Embodied Soul* (The Hague 1971) 67–79, esp. 67–8.

conscious perception, by the impassively contemplating soul, of the impressions produced by sensation. Augustine makes the distinction equally clearly between internal sense and the non-reflexive senses. There is a further parallel between the two philosophers' accounts. At *Enn.* 1. 6. 3. 1–5 Plotinus speaks of the "judgement" which the sensitive faculty exercises in perception. He is referring to a type of perceptual (and fallible), as opposed to rational, identification, similar to the "judgement" of the senses by the internal sense in Augustine.[18] Finally, Porphyry, in his account of αἴσθησις in the *Sententiae* (which follows Plotinus closely), twice asserts that sensation is non-reflexive.[19]

The likelihood of Neoplatonic influence on Augustine's account of internal sense is increased by the following consideration. A close parallel to the passage under discussion is in *Confessions* 7, where, describing the ascent of the self through the degrees of being, Augustine says: "step by step, my thoughts moved on from the consideration of material things to the soul, which perceives things through the senses of the body, and then to the soul's inner power (interiorem vim), to which the bodily senses communicate external facts. Beyond this dumb animals cannot go."[20] This is an obvious reminiscence of the passage in *De libero arbitrio*. The context of the two passages is as relevant as their specific content. In both cases Augustine is describing a hierarchy of degrees extending from bodies to reason and culminating in God, who transcends reason. His immediate purpose in each case is different. In the *Confessions* he is evoking an experience (or experiment); in *De libero arbitrio* he is elaborating a philosophical argument. But this difference should not obscure the common background of the two passages. In the case of the *Confessions* it is Neoplatonic – Augustine tells us so.[21] The parallel *De libero arbitrio* account must also derive from Augustine's reading of the *Platonicorum libri*, although it cannot be proved that the specific texts referred to above are the direct source of Augustine's views.

(III) Augustine does not use the specific concept of internal sense in his other discussions of sense-perception. In two treatises written in the

[18] Cf. Blumenthal's remarks, *op. cit.* 105–6. Unlike Augustine, Plotinus rarely discusses the sensitive faculty of animals. However, he does assert that animals, like us, have consciousness (συναίσθησις, *Enn.* 1. 1. 11. 11). Presumably, like human consciousness, this can be awareness of bodily processes (cf. 5. 3. 2. 4).

[19] *Sententiae* 41 (p. 40. 2–4 Mommert) and 44 (p. 43. 17–18). Plotinus does not discuss the problem of whether the senses are reflexive. But his account of sense-perception would imply that he must conclude that awareness of sense-activity can only be a form of συναίσθησις of the sensitive faculty, cf. A. Graeser, *Plotinus and the Stoics* (Leiden 1972) 136.

[20] *Conf.* 7. 17. 23, transl. R. S. Pine-Coffin (Harmondsworth 1961) 151.

[21] *Conf.* 7. 9. 13, 7. 10. 16, 7. 20. 26. On the parallelism of the last two passages and *Conf.* 7. 17. 23 cf. P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (2nd ed. Paris 1968) 157–67.

same period as *De libero arbitrio* he characteristically emphasizes the sensitive soul's activity or "attention". In *De quantitate animae* he describes the power of the soul (*vis animae*) in sense-perception, which occurs through this attention ("intendit se anima in tactum"). The same sensitive soul engages in other activities – of avoidance or appetition, association of impressions, habitual memory. This soul is common to animals and men.[22] In *De musica* Augustine stresses that the sense-organs are bodily instruments which can be activated by the soul's *attentio*.[23] These passages show that, for Augustine, the sensitive soul's powers are co-extensive with those of internal sense. The notion of "attention" is a re-formulation of the concept of the internal sense's reflexive power.

In his later writings Augustine does not fundamentally change his views on the nature of sense-perception. In *De Trinitate* he stresses the importance of *intentio* and of memory in perceiving the data of sensation. Animals share this ability to perceive and retain images in the memory.[24] In the commentary on Genesis[25] he speaks of "spiritual sight" in terms corresponding exactly to those describing internal sense: the category of *spiritus*, distinct from that of *mens*[26], includes the irrational, and "spiritual sight" is, therefore, also a faculty in animals, controlling the sense-activities and recognizing their data.

The concept of internal sense is not found in Augustine's other accounts, not because, as one modern discussion suggests, "he may have come to believe that he did not need this notion"[27], but because its functions are adequately described by the soul's *intentio*, or *memoria*, or *visio spiritualis*, or some combination of these. In *De libero arbitrio* Augustine's pre-occupation with the hierarchy body-soul-mind and the analogy of sense-perception and knowledge and their objects[28] leads him to describe the mechanism of sensation and perception in a more specific way. The hierarchy must be differentiated, the analogy complete. Hence the precision in his account of internal sense.[29]

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22 *De quant. an.* 33. 71.
23 *De mus.* 6. 5. 10.
24 *De Trin.* 11 *passim*, 12. 2. 2.
25 *De Gen. ad litt.* 12. 11. 22.
26 *Ibid.* 12. 8. 19.
27 Nash, *The Light of the Mind* 73.
28 *De lib. arb.* 2. 6. 52, 2. 7. 58–8. 80.
29 A fuller discussion of the theme of this paper will appear in a forthcoming book on Augustine's philosophy.

AUGUSTINE ON THE ORIGIN OF SOULS

We owe it to the learned perspicacity of HEINRICH DÖRRIE that one of the Neoplatonic sources of Augustine's early views on the soul has been plausibly identified and exploited[1]. It is therefore fitting that the following attempt to assemble and analyse texts in which Augustine treats of a theme which, in late antiquity, vexed Platonist and Hermetist, Christian and non-Christian, alike – the origin of the soul and the mode of its embodiment – should be dedicated to one whose work on the history of Platonism has definitively transformed our understanding of that vast and complex landscape[2].

It will be argued in this paper that the framework of Augustine's analysis is primarily exegetical: that is to say, he speculates within the range of possible plausible meanings of unclear Scriptural texts[3]. In the case of the question of the soul's origin, he is primarily concerned to elucidate relevant parts of the first two chapters of Genesis, as well as to assess the consequences of Adam's sin for mankind. There are, however, topics on which Scripture is silent. One such topic is the nature of the soul. Hence Augustine's concept of the soul as an immaterial, immortal, rational and dynamic entity is substantially a philosophical one. He will inevitably ask questions about the soul that are less raised by the opacity of Scriptures than by the self-generated problems of a particular line of speculative inquiry. Ultimately, however, lack of interpretative assistance from Scripture will lead to analytic atrophy: Augustine will constantly stress the extreme obscurity of the problem[4], and fail to find a solution to it. The non-exegetical question loses its philosophico-theological impetus.

The aims of the following discussion are strictly limited: an attempt will be made to unravel Augustine's argument and identify his favoured conclusions[5]. The texts chosen for analysis will be considered in chronological order, insofar as this can be determined[6].

1 H. DÖRRIE, Porphyrios' »Symmikta Zetemata«. Ihre Stellung in System und Geschichte des Neuplatonismus = Zetemata 20 (Munich 1959), esp. 152/5. Cf. also DÖRRIE, Porphyrios als Mittler zwischen Plotin und Augustin: Miscellanea Mediaevalia 1 (1962) 26/47 = Platonica Minora (see n. 2) 454/73. For its exploitation see above all J. PÉPIN, Une nouvelle source de saint Augustin. Le ζήτημα de Porphyre sur l'union de l'âme et du corps: RevÉtAnc 66 (1964) 53/107 = »Ex Platonicorum Persona«. Études sur les lectures philosophiques de saint Augustin (Amsterdam 1977) 211/67. Cf. R. LORENZ: ThRundsch 40 (1975) 10f.

2 The most important writings now collected in: H. DORRIE, Platonica Minora = Studia et Testimonia Antiqua 8 (Munich 1976).

3 Gen. ad litt. 7,28,43: quaerenda sunt, quae non aperte scriptura loquitur.

4 E.g. epist. 143,7: hi tantum reprehendant, qui reprehendendam putant eandem ipsam *de re tam obscura* cunctationem meam. Ibid.: de animae exortu *caliginosissimae quaestionis obscuritas*. Ibid. 11: in ista *obscurissima quaestione*, quae de anima est. Lib. arb. 3,21,59: harum autem quattuor de anima sententiarum ... *nullam temere adfirmare* oportebit. C. Iulian. 5,4,17: quid fugis *ad obscurissimam de anima quaestionem?* C. Iulian. op. imperf. 4,104: argue de origine animarum cunctationem meam, quia *non audeo* docere vel *affirmare* quod nescio. – Cf. beat. vit. 1.5.

5 Adequate discussion of influences, philosophical and theological, upon Augustine's psychology is beyond the paper's scope, and will form part of a larger study of his thought now in preparation. There are good short accounts (with bibliographies) of Augustine's views by F.-J. THONNARD, Notes complémentaires to anim. = Bibliothèque Augustinienne 22 (Paris 1975) 830/3; P. AGAËSSE / A. SOLIGNAC, notes compl. to Gen. ad litt. = BiblAug 48 (Paris 1972) 695/710. 714/7, and BiblAug 49 (Paris 1972) 530/41.

6 Still fundamental is S. M. ZARB, Chronologia operum S. Augustini (Rome 1934). Cf. also A.-M. LA BONNARDIÈRE, Recherches de chronologie augustinienne (Paris 1965); O. PERLER/J.-L. MAIER, Les voyages de saint Augustin (Paris 1969). For epist. see A. GOLDBACHER: CSEL 58 (1923) 12/63.

The earliest texts already define Augustine's exegetical and speculative preoccupations whenever he discusses the problem of the soul's origin. Exegetically, he must elucidate Gen. 1,26/7 and 2,7, and, like his predecessors[7], reconcile what appear to be two distinct accounts of the creation of man. In De Genesi contra Manichaeos, the first work written after his return to Africa in 388 (retract. 1,10 [9], 1), Augustine appears to be as yet unaware of any need to engage in reconciliation: on the contrary, he elucidates what he considers to be two complementary accounts. Thus the problem of Gen. 1,26 is reduced to the sense in which man is in God's image and likeness, and the answer is traditional and predictable. It is in virtue of intellectus, ratio, animus, that the interior homo resembles God, and has power over the rest of creation (Gen. c. Manich. 1,17,27/8). The verse refers to man, the rational phenomenon, rather than man, the created soul, and is understood allegorically, as is Gen. 1,27, though the joining of male and female, even in a spiritual sense, might suggest, problematically, that there are already separately existing beings (1, 19, 30). When he comments on Gen. 2,7 Augustine clearly understands it, not as the beginning of some new work of creation (alicuius novi operis inchoatio, ibid. 2,7,9), but rather as a fuller restatement (diligentior retractatio) of the earlier passage. What it brings out is the mixture (commixtio) of body and soul in man, in which the soul has a formative and cohesive function, symbolized in the mixture of water and earth in clay (the limus of Scripture). Again, nothing is said of the creative act whereby soul is made, and Augustine clearly does not wish to choose between various interpretations of Gen. 2,7 as a text on the origin of man: the divine insufflatio can either symbolize the ensoulement of an already existing body, or, if man already exists as body and soul, it can express the beginnings of sentience, the creation of a truly living soul. The former, furthermore, would be consistent both with a pre-existent soul and with the soul's creation in the moment of insufflatio (2,8,10)[8]. Augustine is not concerned with the correctness of either view. More important to him is the Scriptural testimony against the Manichees that the mutable human soul is created, and that the Genesis account cannot be used to argue that this soul is a part of the divine nature (2,8,11). Nor does he distinguish between the origins of Adam's soul and those of the rest of mankind. What his allegorical explanation expresses is equally true of all human souls.

In another early text, the De libero arbitrio[9], Augustine considers alternative theories on the soul's origin. He specifies four possible views, and already one of these – the traducianist theory (1) – refers only to souls created after Adam's. The others are: (2) the individual creation of each soul (creationism); or pre-existence and two possible causes of embodiment: (3) souls are sent by God into bodies, or (4) they enter them voluntarily (lib. arb. 3,20,56/21,59)[10]. We must not, Augustine argues, affirm any of these views rashly: he

[7] Cf. G. MAY, Schöpfung aus dem Nichts = Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 48 (Berlin 1978), esp. 22.50.128/30.178. See ibid. 2_2 for a brief survey of the literature on early Christian cosmology.

[8] Gen. c. Manich. 2,8,10: sive quae iam facta erat (sc. anima), sed tamquam in ore dei erat, id est in eius veritate vel sapientia, unde tamen non recessit quasi locis separata, quando insufflata est ... sive tunc anima facta est, quando in illud figmentum deus insufflavit spiritum vitae. The language of the first alternative suggests a Platonically inspired Idea of soul. The same two possibilities are suggested at civ. 12,23, and once again Augustine does not seem to be concerned to choose between them.

[9] Books 2 and 3 were written while Augustine was a presbyter at Hippo (retract. 1,9[8],1), i.e. 391/5.

[10] Augustine's word »labantur« in § 59 may indicate that he is thinking of a Plotinian-type »descent« here: cf. R. J. O'CONNELL, Saint Augustine's early theory of man, A. D. 386–391 (Cambridge, Mass. 1968) 149. But the neutrality of the language of § 58 does not permit one to talk of a »fall of the soul«. For the question of whether the early Augustine ever believed in alternatives (3) and (4) see G. J. P. O'DALY, Did St. Augustine ever believe in the soul's pre-existence?: AugStud 5 (1974) 227/35, and, for a polemical reaction, O'CONNELL, Pre-existence in the early Augustine: RevÉtAug 26 (1980) 176/88.

is not aware of any Scriptural exegesis which elucidates the complex question. All four possibilities are consistent with the notions – defended by Augustine in the discussion – of divine justice and mercy, human free will, and the inheritance of the consequences of Adam's sin. As in Gen. c. Manich. one gets the impression that the speculation here is marginal to other immediate preoccupations of Augustine. However, he will later make use of the distinctions established[11].

In lib. arb. Augustine assumes, in somewhat abrupt fashion, that the traducianist theory would solve the problem of inherited sin[12]: several years later, the bishop and controversialist will show greater caution. In Letter 98,1[13], for example, a concept of inherited sin is defined which does not make an infant individually responsible: for the infant is not as yet a separately existing individual (nondum ... anima separatim vivens, id est altera anima), and does not inherit guilt qua individual (non autem trahit alter ab altero). Only the person capable of free consent is individually guilty. Augustine bases this novel view of the growth of human individuality on an exegesis of Exech. 18,4 (et anima patris mea est, et anima filii mea est) rather than on any psychological foundations.

In letter 143[14], the four theories of lib. arb. are recalled and commented upon. Nothing written in that early work, he argues, indicates a propensity towards one or other of these views: even lib. arb. 3,11,34 (in corporibus autem inferioribus anima post peccatum ordinata regit corpus suum), which seems at first sight to favour either traducianism or embodiment as punishment for previously committed sin (i.e. a strong variant of the fourth alternative), is neutral, if by post peccatum one understands Adam's sin (epist. 143, 5/6).

In lib. arb. 3,21,59 Augustine had said that no Scriptural exegesis known to him had decided the vexed question of the soul's origin. In epist. 143,8/10 a text is discussed which might seem decisive, Eccles. 12,7 (et spiritus revertatur ad deum qui dedit eum). It seems consistent with both traducianism and the pre-existence and individual implantation of souls in bodies by God (the first and third alternatives of lib. arb.), and inconsistent with the creationist view, as well as with the theory of the soul's self-willed embodiment (the second and fourth alternatives). However, Augustine's exegesis is never superficial. He questions whether such an interpretation might not take the verbs reverti and dare too literally. Other usages of dare (dare oculos, etc.) might make this one consistent with creationsim, or even self-willed embodiment[15]. As for reverti, it need not refute the creationist view, if one can adduce a Scriptural idiom where »reverti intellegatur ad deum spiritus creatus tamquam ad auctorem, a quo creatus est, non tamquam ad eum, apud quem primitus fuit (ibid. 10)« Augustine does not, in fact, produce such a text, but his caveat stands: more important, his exegetical scrupulosity betrays an anxiety to keep the options open[16].

[11] Especially in epist. 143 and 166. A somewhat different series of distinctions (deus, natura, necessitas, voluntas nostra), less obviously related to exegetical difficulties, is given in the early beat. vit. 1.

[12] Lib. arb. 3,20,56: deinde si una anima facta est ex qua omnium hominum trahuntur nascentium, quis potest dicere non se peccasse cum primus ille peccavit?

[13] Plausibly dated to 408/10 by M.-F. BERROUARD, »Similitudo« et la définition du réalisme sacramental d'après l'Epître XCVIII, 9–10, de saint Augustin: RevÉtAug 7 (1961) 321/37. GOLDBACHER, op. cit. 30, is more cautious.

[14] Probably written in 412: cf. GOLDBACHER, op, cit. 38.

[15] Augustine adduces the usage tradidit in Rom. 1,24: tradidit illos deus in concupiscentiam cordis eorum.

[16] Cf. epist. 190,17, where Eccles. 12,17 can, it is argued, support either the traducianist or the creationist view.

One theory to which Augustine always refers disapprovingly is the Origenist view of the soul's embodiment as punishment for previously committed sin. We have seen that in epist. 143,5 he is anxious to discount such an interpretation of lib. arb. 3,11,34: he condemns the view at Gen. ad litt. 6,9,14 as contradicting Rom. 9,11 (neque enim habet ullam cunctationem apostolica illa sententia de geminis in utero Rebeccae nondum agentibus aliquid boni aut mali), and again at civ. 11,23, where explicit reference is made to Origen's De principiis[17]. Clearly this view of the soul's descent is not equated by Augustine with the self-willed embodiment theorem of lib. arb. The latter, equally clearly, is for him a morally neutral act, and so not to be equated either with the optimistic or pessimistic views of the soul's descent in the Christian Platonist, Hermetic and Platonic traditions[18].

It is in Gen. ad litt.[19] that Augustine offers a fully-fledged account of the significance of Gen. 1,26/7 and 2,7 – and one which reveals the limitations of the Gen. c. Manich. discussion. For now he argues that Gen. 2,7 is in no way a mere restatement of 1,26 (recapitulatio, Gen. ad litt. 6,1,1). The latter refers, not to the creation of man in his full actuality as a moral agent (homo ista iam specie, qua in sua natura vivit et agit sive bonum sive malum, 6,1,2), but to a ratio causalis of man, a potential which is only realized in the temporal succession of the creation account[20]. In the six-day creation, therefore, man, like the plants and animals, but unlike the firmament, earth, sea and stars, is not actually and specifically formed. Gen. 1,26 does not refer to a creation of man's soul prior to his body (6,7,12). For one, that would undermine the completion of creation, in the sense of Gen. 2,2. And Augustine thereby clarifies a further obscurity of the Gen. c. Manich. account. For the reference to the two sexes in Gen. 1,27, he argues, presupposes that in some way a distinction that can only be bodily already exists: to allegorize the passage absolutely would be to cut it adrift from its essential literal moorings.

These conclusions clear the way for Augustine's interpretation in Gen. ad litt. 7,1,1ff of Gen. 2,7. Here he can address himself to the nature of the anima viva of that verse. His usual denial that its nature is the divine substance[21] is here based on the a fortiori argument that, if there is a distinction between the human soul and human breath, there can be one between divine substance and its flatus (7,3,4). In any case, divine transcendence and immutability would be undermined by any identification of human soul and divine substance (7,2,3; 7,4,6). There remain the possibilities that the soul is created ex nihilo or ex aliqua re (in the sense of something other than divine nature). Augustine devotes considerable care to testing the latter hypothesis. In effect, he is seeking for a plausible materies animae, in a spiritual sense (7,5,7; 7,6,9). The soul's mutability seems to suggest the possibility of its being ex materie (7,6,9). But what could this matter be? It must surely be rational and alive, even if only in a potential sense (7,7,10). It is, however, difficult to avoid concluding that its life is a happy one (beata vita, 7,8,11), and if that is so, its embodiment would be a deterioration of its condition: far from being a formation of pre-existent matter, embodiment of the soul would be a defluxio[22]. Now it is precisely such a pessimistic notion of embodiment as degradation that Augustine would discount. Once again, too, he denies a moral interpretation of the self-will hypothesis, insofar as he argues that the soul cannot make moral choices in a pre-incarnate state (ibid.).

[17] Cf. W. THEILER, Augustin und Origenes: Augustinus 13 (1968) 423/32 = Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur (Berlin 1970) 543/53. For the importance of the Origenist views in contemporary Western controversy see Rufin. Apol. ad. Anast. 6 (CCL 20,27). For Augustine's use of Rom. 9,11 see W. EBOROWICZ, Ad Romanos 9,11 et la critique augustinienne de la théorie du péché de l'âme préexistante: TU 103 (Berlin 1968) 272/6.

[18] The ignorantia and difficultas of lib. arb. 3,20,58 are subsequent to soul's embodiment, not a cause of it. For the fall of the soul in Hermetic and Neoplatonic contexts see A.-J. FESTUGIÈRE, La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste. 3: Les doctrines de l'âme (Paris 1953), 63/96. For Plotinus in particular see N. BALADI, Origine et signification de l'audace chez Plotin: Le Néoplatonisme. Colloques Internationaux du CNRS (Paris 1971) 89/97.

[19] Begun by 404, if not earlier; complete by 414. Cf. ZARB, op. cit. 53; AGAËSSE/SOLIGNAC, BiblAug 48, 25/31.

[20] Gen. ad litt. 6,5,7: aliter ergo tunc, id est potentialiter atque causaliter, sicut illi operi conpetebat, quo creavit omnia simul ... aliter autem nunc, sicut ea videmus, quae per temporalia spatia creat, sicut usque nunc operatur. For Augustine's interpretation of Ioh. 5,17 in relation to Gen. 2,2 see Gen. ad litt. 4,11,21/13,24; 5,4,10.11. See also epist. 166,11. For Adam and Eve as rationes causales cf. Gen. ad litt. 6,5,8; 6,6,10.11; 6.9.16. For the concept of ratio causalis/seminalis in Augustine cf. AGAËSSE/SOLIGNAC, BiblAug 48, 653/68.

[21] Here probably directed as much against the Priscillianists as against the Manichees, cf. AGAËSSE/SOLIGNAC, BiblAug 48, 698/9.

In general, Augustine has difficulties about identifying a matter for the soul. To argue that it might be an irrational substance is no less rewarding, for the identification of such a substance's source involves one in a regressus (7,9,12). To suggest that it might be a corporeal substance involves one in the untenable assumption that soul can derive from body (7,12,18/15,21). The argument ends inconclusively. Augustine remarks that, insofar as the soul is not a transformed rational, irrational or corporeal nature, it may be said to be created ex nihilo, even if this ex nihilo creation cannot be referred to at Gen. 2,7, for to assert that would be to undermine the interpretation of Gen. 1,26 already given, as well as to assert that God creates something new from nothing after the completion of his work referred to in Gen. 2,2 (7,28,40). Augustine is thus forced to consider more closely what exactly the theory of a ratio causalis, as applied to soul, implies, and to see if it is a more satisfactory hypothesis than that of a matter for soul.

If the ratio causalis of soul was indeed created in the six-day creation, Augustine must define its vehicle[23], as opposed to its matter – the »natura, ubi conderetur« (7,22,32). In the case of the human body, its hidden (occulta) ratio may be considered to be latent in earth, the »matter« from which it is subsequently formed (velut in semine). What vehicle can be found for soul? Augustine rejects the idea that it might be God: soul would not then be created as a distinct entity, even in the latent sense of ratio causalis (7,22,33). In fact, that would be to confuse ratio causalis with the rationes aeternae (the two are distinguished at 6,10,17). It seems, therefore, that we should have to posit the existence of an inactive spiritual creation (creatura spiritalis), whose real function would be to contain the ratio of the future, fully-fledged human soul[24]. There is, however, no scope in the Scriptural account for such a hypothesis, unless we are to assume that the spiritus intellectualis of the first day could act as a vehicle. But this would make the angelic nature in some sense the human soul's parent, and Augustine finds that idea no more acceptable[25]. The hypothesis of a ratio causalis of the soul thus fails: Augustine is left with the one remaining view, that the human soul itself is created ex nihilo in the six-day creation, simultaneously, one must add, with the causal reasons of the human body[26].

[22] Used here in the twofold sense of derivation and degradation, cf. BiblAug 48, 524_{10}. Elsewhere, e.g. c. Priscill. 2,2, Augustine can use it in a neutral sense.

[23] By this Augustine appears to mean no more than the necessary »container« of the ratio qua latent force.

[24] Gen. ad litt. 7,22,33: parens ergo animae instituta est aliqua creatura spiritalis, in qua sit ratio futurae animae, quae non inde existat, nisi cum eam deus homini inspirandam facit.

[25] Ibid. 7,23,34: durum est hoc angeli aut angelorum filiam dicere esse animam.

[26] Ibid. 7,24,35: credatur ergo ... ut ... anima vero iam ipsa crearetur, sicut primitus conditus est dies, et creata lateret in operibus dei, donec eam suo tempore sufflando, hoc est inspirando, formato ex limo corpore insereret. Cf. ibid. 10,2,3: illud credibilius vel tolerabilius dici visum est, quod ipsa hominis anima in illis operibus facta est, corpus vero eius in mundo corporeo tamquam in semine ratio.

On this last hypothesis, a really existent human soul is subsequently embodied in a human body. Alternatives (3) and (4) of the lib. arb. account re-emerge: either the soul is embodied by divine will (dei nutu), or it inclines towards body voluntarily (voluntate propria ... inclinatio voluntatis). In neither case, Augustine again insists, would the soul's movement be morally qualifiable as good or bad, referring, as in Gen. ad litt. 6,9,14, to Rom, 9,11 (7,25,36). But if embodiment is not willed, neither can it be plausibly said to be enforced: Augustine, consciously if implicitly, avoids the Origenist pitfall. He suggests that it may be best to suppose that soul does will embodiment, but in a sub-moral sense (hoc naturaliter velle, 7,27,38), just as the life-instinct in man is natural in a sub-moral way (sicut naturale nobis est velle vivere).

The Scriptural passages hitherto discussed in Gen. ad litt. can be understood as referring to the creation of Adam's soul, and no more: with the creation of Eve the problem of the origin of other souls, and, in general, of individual souls, is posed. Augustine considers three possiblities in book 10 of Gen. ad litt. The first is an explicit extension to all souls of the hypothesis proposed at 7,24,35: individual souls are created qua actual existents in the six-day creation (a »proto-creationist« view). A second suggestion is the traducianist hypothesis. Finally, it is possible that individual souls are created in time as individuals come into existence (creationism in the usual sense): here Augustine explicitly excludes the prior existence of a ratio of the soul (10,1,1/3,4)[27]. The third hypothesis is the most difficult to maintain: it can hardly be reconciled with the completion of creation in the six-day act and with the simultaneity of the »aspects« of this act, without recourse to the discredited theory of pre-existent rationes in God or in his creation (10,4,5), or to the suspiciously sophistic argument that, strictly speaking, God is not creating anything new, because individual souls are of the same genus as the »original« one (ibid.). Augustine expresses dissatisfaction with the consequences of such a hypothesis: it is, in fact, none other than the rejected de nihilo hypothesis of 7,28,40.

This leaves the first two alternatives[28]. The Old Testament texts discussed in 10,6,9/9,16 do not clearly support either alternative, with the apparent exception of Sap. 8,19/20[29], which seems to argue for pre-existence and subsequent embodiment in accordance with prior merit or demerit – in other words, for the Origenist view, the view which Augustine will repudiate here (10,15,27) as rationalizing the economy of mortality which is, and should remain, mysterious. Indeed, upon re-examination, the passage can even be interpreted in a traducianist sense (10,17,31). It too remains ambiguous: Augustine will hesitate between the first[30] and second possibilities until the end of Book 10 (10,21,37), only condemning corporealist theories of soul such as Tertullians's traducianism (10,25,41/26,45).

Letter 166 to Jerome, despite the promising title De origine animae hominis given it by Augustine (retract. 2,4,5), adds little that is new to the extensive, if inconclusive, specula-

[27] Ibid. 10,3,4: (a) non ratio animae velut in parente ratio prolis, sed ipsa omnino, cum factus est dies, facta sit anima, sicut ipse dies, sicut caelum et terra et caeli lumina; (b) in illis primis dei operibus unam animam primi hominis factam, de cuius propagine omnes hominum animae crearentur; (c) novas subinde animas fieri, quarum nulla vel ratio facta praecesserit.

[28] There seems to be no need to assume, with AGAËSSE/SOLIGNAC, BiblAug 49,533f, that Augustine amalgamates hypothesis (a) with (c), ibid. 10,6,9: rather he implicitly suppresses (c), and reformulates (a).

[29] Quoted ibid. 10,7,12: sortitus sum animam bonam et, cum essem magis bonus, veni ad corpus incoinquinatum. Cf. further discussion of this text at 10,9,15; 10,17,30/18,32.

[30] Surprisingly, both here and ibid. 7,24,35 (unless it is relevant that this latter text refers primarily to Adam's soul), Augustine seems unaware of the Origenist implications of the theory: cf. Rufin. Apol. ad Anast. 6.

tion of Gen. ad litt.[31]. Augustine betrays the connection between the problem of origins and his current theological pre-occupations – infant guilt and original sin, and the necessity of infant baptism. If souls are individually created, when and how do infants commit the sin that baptism removes (epist. 166,10)? The problems are not lessened by recourse to the pre-existence hypothesis (ibid. 27). The traducianist view is not exploited in this letter, which is an unequivocal request for elucidation from Jerome. Jerome's views were not to be communicated to Augustine: in epist. 180,2 the latter is still concerned to know whether, on the creationist hypothesis, divine goodness can be reconciled with the notion of infant damnation[32].

In Letter 190[33] the alternatives of traducianism and creationism are once again broached. Augustine admits that he has not proferred a definite view (definitam ... sententiam, 1,2) on the matter in his writings. Themes from earlier discussions are reiterated[34]. But epist. 190 is novel insofar as it devotes some attention to the problem of traducianism in a spiritual sense. How are souls, on this hypothesis, propagated? Is there an incorporeal semen animae transmitted by father to mother at conception? Is this (less credibly) in the corporeal seed? If so, what happens in seed-emissions which do not lead to conception? For the seed of an immortal soul can hardly perish. Augustine tentatively suggests that it may only receive immortality when formed by God as a living soul. But this raises questions about the nature of this formative process and about the usefulness of the analogy with justice which Augustine makes[35]. Again he hesitates, doubts, and justifies his doubt by re-asserting Scriptural lack of guidance on the problem. Even apparent references to animae in what seem a traducianist sense may refer, metaphorically, to bodies (epist. 190,18/9). The debt of original sin is a doctrine that cannot be controverted by rational argument (§ 22): it remains to be shown how this debt is contracted (§ 24). The phenomenon of Christ's soul is, in this context, unhelpful: for it will, in any case, be an exception to whatever view is defended[36].

Augustine's later writings do not add anything of significance to this picture. He can controvert the views of Vincentius Victor on the soul in anim.[37] without introducing new

[31] Date: 415 (GOLDBACHER, op. cit. 44; ZARB, op. cit. 64/7). Lib. arb. 3,20,56/21,59 is referred to in § 7 and 19. For the letter's relevance to contemporary issues see G. BONNER, Rufinus of Syria and African Pelagianism: AugStud 1 (1970) 31/47. Cf. the analysis of R. J. O'CONNELL, Augustine's rejection of the fall of the soul: AugStud 4 (1973) 1/32, esp. 17/29.

[32] Epist. 180,2 (dateable to 416, cf. GOLDBACHER, op. cit. 47): merito quaeritur, si verum est novas ex nihilo animas singulis nascentibus fieri, quo modo tam innumerabiles animae parvulorum, quas deo certum est ante rationales annos, antequam quicquam iustum iniustumve sapere vel capere possint, sine baptismo de corporibus exituras, iuste in damnationem dentur ab illo utique, apud quem non est iniquitas. Augustine presumably concentrates on the difficulties of the creationist view in epist. 166 and here because he believes that Jerome is inclined to this view: in fact, Jerome also vacillates, cf. J. N. D. KELLY, Jerome. His life, writings, and controversies (London 1975) 317_{49}.

[33] For its date (418) and chronological relationship to anim., see LA BONNARDIÈRE, op. cit. 67/9. Cf. also A. DE VEER, Introduct. to anim., BiblAug 22, 275/90.

[34] Embodiment not a punishment for sin (§ 4); infant innocence may be due either to creatio ex nihilo of individual souls (here Augustine, though not explicitly, might appear to be returning to the rejected view of Gen. ad litt. 7,28,40 and 10,4,5) or – on the traducianist view – to the lack of individuality in the infant (§ 5), cf. epist. 98,1. Nonetheless, the necessity that even infant souls be saved through baptism calls for an explanation of their damnationis meritum (§ 13) as a part of the massa damnata (§ 9).

[35] Epist. 190,15: an immortalitatem tunc accipit, quando formatur ut vivat, sicut iustitiam quando formatur ut sapiat. et quo pacto eam deus fingat in homine, etiamsi anima seminaliter trahatur ex anima ...

[36] Ibid. 25; cf. Gen. ad litt. 10,18,32/21,37. Cf. W. GEERLINGS, Christus Exemplum. Studien zu Christologie und Christusverkündigung Augustins = Tübinger Theologische Studien 13 (Mainz 1978) 133/40.

[37] E.g. his blurring of the distinction between divine nature and human soul; his corporealist view of the latter; his pessimistic view of embodiment; his view that soul is moulded by body, can grow and stop growing. – The

views of his own on its origin. Resignation sometimes gives way to impatience. He can find the problems of the soul's origin as introduced by the Pelagians a non necessaria quaestio (c. Pelag. 3,10,26)[38]. Ignorance on the matter will not prejudice man's chances of salvation (c. Iulian. 5,4,17)[39]. In his final, incomplete work against Julian of Eclanum, Augustine envisages Adam as representative of the human race, insofar as the seed of his descendants is contained in him. The view of the unity of human nature put forward there can hardly be understood to refer its bodily nature only, for it is Adam's will that effects the sinful change in human nature[40]. We could see this final view as supporting a type of traducianism, unless Augustine is thinking of the notion that the flesh corrupts the soul which it contains[41]. But the discussion is not sufficiently detailed for us to be fully confident of Augustine's precise meaning: the agnosticism of the Retractationes on the soul's origin must stand[42].

circumstances leading to the composition of anim. are well discussed by A. DE VEER, Aux origines du De natura et origine animae de saint Augustin: RevÉtAug 19 (1973) 121/57, and BiblAug 22, 275/90.

[38] The date is uncertain: 419/23 seems to be the likely period: cf. ZARB, op. cit. 71/2; LA BONNARDIÈRE, op. cit. 76_2; PERLER/MAIER, op. cit. 361. Note the reiterated view that basic tenets of faith, such as original sin and the need for infant baptism, define the scope of discussions about the soul.

[39] Ibid.: hoc quod de anima latet, aut ex otio discitur, aut, sicut alia multa in hac vita, sine salutis labe nescitur. C. Iulian. may be dated to 421/2: cf. PERLER/MAIER, op. cit. 370, correcting ZARB, op. cit. 72.

[40] C. Iulian. op. imperf. 4,104: sed poterat Ambrosius hoc intellegere, quod tu non potes, non hoc dici propter arbitrium singulorum, sed propter originem seminis, unde omnes futuri erant: secundum quam originem omnes in illo uno erant, et hi omnes unus ille erant, qui in se ipsis nulli adhuc erant ... secundum rationem seminis ... quando ille (sc. Adam) propria voluntate peccatum illud grande peccavit, naturamque in se vitiavit, mutavit, obnoxiavit humanam. Cf. ibid. 2,177. – The work was probably not begun before 428, cf. PERLER/MAIER, op. cit. 386; better than ZARB, op. cit. 85. – For the notion of the human race's solidarity with Adam in other writings of Augustine see G. DE BROGLIE, Pour une meilleure intelligence du »De Correptione et Gratia«: AugMag 3 (1954) 317/37, and M. E. ALFLATT, The responsibility for involuntary sin in saint Augustine: RechAug 10 (1975) 171/86, esp. 179/85.

[41] Cf. c. Iulian. 5,17.

[42] Retract. 1,1,3: nec tunc sciebam, nec nunc scio.

Predestination and Freedom in Augustine's Ethics

In his great poem *The Wreck of the Deutschland* Gerard Manley Hopkins evokes the conversions of Paul and Augustine as two contrasting examples of the way in which God may intervene in human affairs:

With an anvil-ding
And with fire in him forge thy will
Or rather, rather then, stealing as Spring
Through him, melt him but master him still:
Whether at once, as once at a crash Paul,
Or as Austin, a lingering-out swéet skíll . . .[1]

For Hopkins, the sudden conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus, and the gradual conversion which Augustine describes in the *Confessions*, and which culminates in the garden at Milan, are both manifestations of the one God who is, paradoxically, 'lightning and love . . . a winter and warm', who is the God of mercy, but also of mastery.

In the *Confessions* the conversion of Paul does not figure among the examples presented by Augustine as parallel to his experience, despite the Pauline colouring of the conversion account itself. The reason must lie in the contrast expressed in Hopkins' poem. Augustine's long process of conversion, and the part which human intermediaries, wittingly or unwittingly, play in it, have no parallels in the accounts of Paul's conversion in Acts.[2] Yet in two works written towards the end of his life, works composed in the aftermath of the Pelagian controversy but still dominated by the issues of that controversy,[3] Augustine turns to

[1] *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 4th edn, W. H. Gardner and N. H. MacKenzie (eds) (Oxford University Press, 1967), 54.

[2] Cf. Acts 9, 22, and 26. For a perceptive discussion of these accounts, Pauline references to his conversion, and Augustine's exploitation of Paul see P. Fredriksen, 'Paul and Augustine: Conversion Narratives, Orthodox Traditions, and the Retrospecitve Self', *Journal of Theological Studies* NS **37** (1986), 3–34.

[3] On the issues see the lucid account of G. Bonner, *St Augustine of Hippo: Life and Controversies*, 2nd edn (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1986), 352–393. The progress of the controversy is described by P. Brown, *Augustine of*

consider both Paul's conversion and his own, and finds the same underlying factors at work in both. In Paul's conversion there is no apparent trace of free choice: 'For the call to come from heaven, and for him to be converted by so great and effective a call, there was the grace of God alone; for he merited much, but much evil' (*De gratia et libero arbitrio* 5.12). In the same passage Augustine quotes a number of Pauline texts which assert the co-existence of divine grace and free will, particularly 'not I, but the grace of God with me' (1 Cor. 15:10). It is not the aspect of human will, but the manner in which divine grace implants faith in the human being without any antecedent merit on his or her part, that Paul's case exemplifies. When he turns to his own conversion account in the *Confessions* and reconsiders it, Augustine likewise emphasizes the divine gift of faith which, in his case, makes an active enemy of Christianity into a willing believer (*De dono perseverantiae* 20.53). In this late reassessment of his conversion, Augustine has subtly modified the *Confessions* account to make it sound more like that of a Pauline conversion: 'I was ravaging [the faith] with most pitiable and raging talkativeness'. The gradual aspect of his conversion is not denied, but it becomes external to him (his mother's persistent faith, and its intermediary role, is stressed), and it is the unmerited gift of grace that is dominant. The conversion of Augustine's will is not omitted, but as with Paul, it is God's gratuitous initiative that is now the most striking fact about Augustine's conversion. In the late Augustine, the road to Damascus and the garden in Milan have become settings for the same divine drama, in which God's enemy becomes God's servant.

Yet this alignment of two apparently different conversion experiences does not mark any late, radical change in Augustine's theory of grace and election. It is, rather, a reflection of the fact that, at the end of his career, as Gillian Evans has observed, 'Augustine finds the internal coherence of his account of the matter growing tighter at every point, each principle supporting the rest'.[4] Only a slight shift of emphasis is needed, and the inherent similarities of the two conversions are revealed. In fact, the principles of Augustine's account of grace, election, and freedom were, as is well known, established as early as 396 or 397, when he wrote in reply to questions sent him by Simplicianus of Milan (*Ad Simplicianum*). There, in a work completed before he begins the *Confessions*, and which antedates the Pelagian controversy

[4] G. R. Evans, *Augustine on Evil* (Cambridge University Press, 1982), 168.

Hippo: A Biography (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 340–407, and (with full documentation) by O. Wermelinger, *Rom und Pelagius* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1975). See also J. P. Burns, *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace* (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1980).

by many years, he argues that God determines our wills when we will what is good, and also that such willing is none the less free choice, for which we are responsible.[5] Augustine's subsequent writing on the subject is exploration of these two assertions and of their ramifications. They are the corner-stone of his doctrine of predestination, and concomitant defence of human freedom. To the details of that doctrine we must now turn.

Much of the detail of Augustine's account of free will and predestination is concerned with humanity after the Fall. But it is none the less important to understand what Augustine believes to have been the nature of Adam's freedom before the Fall. Adam in Paradise enjoyed divine grace as a 'help without which' (*adiutorium sine quo non*) he could not choose the good, or even avoid evil. Divine grace for Adam in Paradise was a necessary, but not sufficient condition of his free choice of the good. It did not render him incapable of sin, but it ensured that he had the means of choosing good. But even in Adam's prelapsarian state, freedom of choice on its own was not a sufficient condition of doing good. Only free choice and divine grace together suffice for good.[6]

Adam (and the fallen angels) had the power to avoid sin. We need not, in the present paper, consider the reasons for the Fall, but we should note one reason which Augustine gives for its possibility in a being of Adam's intellectual and moral integrity. Adam, and all created beings, according to Augustine, are liable to sin because they are created out of nothing.[7] This 'ontological weakness' does not entail their sinning, but it makes it possible that they will choose evil. Augustine does not elaborate on this endemic weakness in all created rational beings, but his assumption that it is present influences what he has to say about the nature of the elect, as will be seen later in the paper.

In his early work *De libero arbitrio (On Free Choice)* Augustine distinguishes between three kinds of goods. The 'great goods', the highest kind, include the virtues, and can be used only for good, whereas the lowest or minimal goods, to which all kinds of physical beauty belong, and the intermediate or middle goods may be used for both good and evil ends. Will is a middle good, and what distinguishes it from the lowest kind of goods is that its activity is necessary to 'living rightly', whereas the possession of the lowest goods is not necessary to

[5] *Ad Simplicianum* 1.2.

[6] Cf. *De civitate Dei* 14.26; *De correptione et gratia* 10.28–12.34. See G. Bonner, 'Adam', *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1, fasc. 1/2 (1986), 63–87, especially 78–80.

[7] Cf. *De civ. Dei* 12.6; 14.13; *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 5.39. See Bonner, op. cit. (above n. 3), 369.

virtue (*lib. arb.* 2.19.50–53). Augustine here advocates a concept of will that could be described as morally indifferent: the neutral will can be used either rightly or wrongly. The work *On Free Choice* was completed by 395. In the *Confessions*, begun some two years later, Augustine has already moved away from the notion of the will as an indifferent instrument, used for good or ill, to the concept of will as good or evil, depending upon the value of what is willed.[8] This latter concept of a will that is morally determined represents Augustine's mature thought on the subject. The Pelagian controversy, however, focused attention on Augustine's views in the work *On Free Choice*, in which Pelagius and others found evidence that appeared to make Augustine hold views akin to theirs.[9] It is surely no accident that, as Robert Evans has pointed out, Augustine implicitly disclaims his theory of the indifferent will in his first anti-Pelagian treatise *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins (De peccatorum meritis et remissione)*.[10] Here he repudiates the idea that the will can somehow be 'in the middle' (*in medio*), and neither good nor evil. Will is either good or evil, and a good will is 'from God'. Moreover, a good will cannot be misused for evil (*De pecc. mer.* 2.18.30). This was Augustine's view in 411 or 412. In the course of the discussion he refers to his earlier concept of will as a natural good that can be misused, and which is 'freely directed in this direction and in that', thereby acknowledging the phenomena of choice, moral conflict, and apparent abuse of freedom. But the progress of the discussion leaves the reader in no doubt that, although Augustine wishes to maintain that the will, like all created things, is a good, even when it is corrupted, he repudiates any view which makes the will a morally neutral power. Augustine's terminological imprecision can sometimes puzzle and dismay his readers. In his work *On the Spirit and the Letter (De spiritu et littera)*, written shortly after *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins* in 412, he resurrects the description of the will as a 'middle power' (*media vis*), capable of being turned to faith or unbelief (*spir. et litt.* 33.58), even if he reaffirms in the same context the view that the will to believe is received from God. But, once again, the larger context of the work makes it clear that the middle power of the will is not a description of its neutral or indifferent nature, but rather of its capacity for change. 'The human will is not removed, but is changed from an evil into a good will by grace', a view expressed by Augustine in a later work (*De gratia et libero arbitrio* 20.41), might also be the motto of *On the Spirit and the Letter*.

[8] Cf. especially *Confessions* 8.8.19–9.21, discussed later in this paper.

[9] See Augustine's reaction to Pelagian views of *De libero arbitrio* in *Retractationes* 1.9. Cf. *De natura et gratia* 67.80–1.

[10] R. F. Evans, *Pelagius: Inquiries and Reappraisals* (London: A. & C. Black, 1968), 87–88.

Pelagius's description of human freedom of choice as a *possibilitas utriusque partis*, a 'power to take either side',[11] and his comparison of this power with a fruitful and fecund root that can produce either the blossom of virtue or the brambles of vice, leads Augustine to deny explicitly that the same will can choose good and evil. Augustine counters Pelagius's metaphor with a related one from Scripture: 'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit' (Matthew 7:18). The causes of good and evil actions are twofold good and evil wills, determined in turn by grace or sin (*De gratia Christi* 18.19–20.21). Augustine wrote these words in 418. Controversy with Pelagius had elicited an unequivocal expression of his views on the will from him.

Will, for Augustine, is never a mental faculty, never, in the Platonic sense, a 'part of the soul'. Even in the early *On Free Choice* it is no more and no less than a kind of mental power or capacity, like memory, with which it is compared in that work (*lib. arb.* 2.19.51). In Augustine's later theory will is evidently, in John Rist's words, 'the human *psyche* in its role as a moral agent'.[12] The will reflects a person's moral standing. That is certainly the way in which Augustine understands the 'men of good will' of Scripture (Luke 2:14): they are, simply, the good (*De gratia et libero arbitrio* 1.4). But as well as referring to our will in the singular, and calling it good or bad, Augustine also speaks of two or more wills in us, as when, for example, he wishes to suggest moral conflict. In such contexts, our wills are the range of possible courses of action upon which we are inclined or deliberating. I shall return to this second sense of the term 'will' in Augustine later in the paper.

It is now time to go on to further details of Augustine's views on grace and election, views which can only be understood against the background of his concept of the will which we have been examining. I shall remind you briefly of the main points of Augustine's doctrine, and dwell only on some of its obscurer or more controversial aspects.[13]

Humanity after the Fall retains the power of free choice (*liberum arbitrium*), but fallen man's freedom is merely the freedom or power to sin. Even faith in God is impossible without grace: *initium fidei donum dei* ('the beginning of faith is the gift of God', *De dono perseverantiae* 20.52). Augustine criticizes his early view that such faith is naturally

[11] Or 'a power to X or not-X'.

[12] J. M. Rist, 'Augustine on Free Will and Predestination', *Journal of Theological Studies* NS **20** (1969), 421.

[13] For the following see, apart from Bonner, op. cit. (above n. 3), 358–393, and Rist, art. cit. (above n. 12), 420–442, the classic account of O. Rottmanner, *Der Augustinismus* (Munich: Lentner, 1892), reprinted in *Geistesfrüchte aus der Klosterzelle* (Munich: Lentner, 1908), 11–32.

possible in the late work *On the Predestination of the Saints (praed. sanct.* 3.7). He never tires of quoting Proverbs 8:35: *praeparatur voluntas a domino*, 'the will is prepared by the Lord', in references to the genesis of the good will in us.[14] The good will is not merely prepared by God, but God eternally and timelessly foreknows that it will be. Therefore God foreknows both the salvation of the saved and the damnation of the damned. Now, when Augustine speaks of divine foreknowledge (which, since it is timeless, he prefers to call 'divine knowledge'), he understands it to be a knowledge that does not necessarily determine the foreknown event.[15] He distinguishes clearly between divine foreknowledge and predestination: predestination, the determining of certain events by God, entails God's knowledge, for God is omniscient, but the converse does not follow (*praed. sanct.* 10.19). At the same time, there is an inevitable parallelism in Augustine's accounts of divine foreknowledge and predestination. Thus God's predestination of the saved as well as of the damned—and, contrary to the view sometimes expressed, Augustine does speak of the predestination of the damned[16]—is eternal and timeless: it 'precedes' the creation, in the sense that his foreknowledge does.[17] Predestination to damnation is simply the withholding by God of grace from those he does not will to save. That is to say, whereas predestination to salvation is actively caused by God, God merely permits the damned to suffer the consequences of Adam's sin. Augustine suggests that nothing (not even the sins of Satan and Adam) happens 'apart from God's will' (*praeter voluntatem dei*), even if some things do happen 'against his will' (*contra voluntatem eius*). God lets Adam sin, but does not cause him to do so (*Enchiridion* 100). We might say that the predestination of the damned is a negative condition of their damnation. Condemned through the solidarity of all humans with Adam, they are predestined because God foreknows that he will not give them the grace to be saved.

But it is with the predestination of the elect that Augustine, and we, are chiefly concerned. Their predestination is *gratiae praeparatio*, 'the preparation of grace', and grace is its effect (*praed. sanct.* 10.19). Augustine suggests that God's promises to Abraham in Genesis 17:4–5 are a pre-eminent instance of predestination. The implementation of the divine promises does not depend on human wills, though they are

[14] Cf. A. Sage, 'Praeparatur voluntas a Deo', *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* **10** (1964), 1–20.

[15] See R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum* (London: Duckworth, 1983), 253–267.

[16] Cf. *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus CXXIV* 48.4,6; 107.7; 111.5.

[17] Cf. *In Io. ev. tract* 68.1; *De Genesi ad litteram* 6.11.19; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 9.18.

implemented through human actions. The notion that God's promises should depend for their fulfilment on humans alone is untenable (ibid.). Fallen humanity cannot achieve goodness on its own.

It follows that God's determination of our wills through grace precedes any merits of ours. But Augustine is no less insistent that divine determination of our wills does not make us mere passive recipients of grace. He repudiates the view of Julian of Eclanum that his (Augustine's) doctrine of grace is a doctrine of absolute determinism or *fatum*.[18] For Augustine, the notion of 'compulsion of the will' (*cogi velle*) is nonsensical (*Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 1.101). Augustine takes this view because he is convinced of the self-evident nature of the fact that we will, that we have the power to do X through, and only through, the means of willing X. He believes that this fact about us is ascertained by infallible introspective analysis of the mechanism of our behaviour, and by deductions from the observed behaviour of others.[19] It is corroborated by the authority of Scripture, where divine commands, promises, and threats, and the whole apparatus of divine rewards and punishments, entail the concept of human freedom and responsibility.[20] Even the elect cannot be rewarded for something for which they are not responsible.

The importance of Augustine's theory of action cannot be underestimated in an account of his views on grace and free will. The activity of *intentio*, of mental concentration or attention, is an essential ingredient of the processes of sense-perception, imagination, and memory. *Intentio* is the necessary mental prelude to all action. And *intentio* is none other than the activity of willing in its basic form.[21] Neither at the level of sense-perception, nor in the activities of imagination or memory are we passively determined beings. The notion of passive determination is contradicted by the evident facts of human psychology. The mind's movement, says Augustine, is activated by the will, and it is not like the movement of a stone which falls to the ground by a law of natural necessity (*lib. arb.* 3.1.2).

When Augustine applies his psychological theory to problems of grace and free will, he argues that the only way in which grace may become operative in humans is by the attraction of the will to what is good and true. The will is always goal-directed, it is active, but only to

[18] Cf. *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* 2.5.9–6.12.

[19] See A. Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: California University Press, 1982), 123–132, 231–238.

[20] See e.g. *De lib. arb.* 2.1.

[21] Cf. G. O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (London: Duckworth, 1987), 43–45,84–87, 108–111, 132–133, for the role of *intentio* in perception and other mental activities.

some purpose. Augustine speaks of the 'delight' (*delectatio*) of the will in its objects. This delight is said to be 'conquering' or 'victorious' (*delectatio vincens/victrix*) when a particular choice is made or course of action adopted. *Delectatio* is a feature of the good, but also of the evil will: it can be *delectatio iustitiae*, but also *delectatio peccandi*.[22] When John Burnaby situates this concept in its larger context of Augustine's idea of love (*amor*), he rightly points out that Augustine 'is simply isolating for the moment the affective aspect of *amor*'.[23] That is to say, Augustine's reader should not forget that the affective element in Augustine's concept of *amor* is balanced and complemented by its conative counterpart. Delight and willing are aspects of the same process. If I will X, then my willing is necessarily accompanied by delight in X. But Augustine argues that this is none the less not a total determination of my will by something external to it. I will actively, deliberately, and freely. *Delectatio* is not an instinctive reaction to external stimuli, not a reflex action: when Augustine wishes to distinguish such phenomena from the rational assent that is present in *delectatio*, he sometimes uses the verbs *placet* and *libet* in binary opposition, *placet* to connote *delectatio, libet* to suggest instinctive reactions (*Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* 1.2.5, 1.13.27).[24] Augustine insists upon the active nature of human responses to divine grace: 'God makes man act' (*ut . . . faciat homo deus facit, contra Iul. imp.* 1.134). It is both the case that we will and act, and that God makes us will and act (*De gratia et lib. arb.* 16.32).

The conclusion is unavoidable that, for Augustine, divine grace is irresistible, in the sense that it is not within our power, if we are predestined, to reject it. This does not make of Augustine a Jansenist determinist, for he is not arguing that grace compels us. What Augustine is emphasizing is, as Burnaby says, 'the Almighty providence which rules the issues of all human willing'.[25] Grace transforms and activates the human will: men 'are acted upon that they may act, not that they may be themselves inactive' (*aguntur . . . ut agant, non ut ipsi nihil agant, De correptione et gratia* 2.4). When, in the work *On the Spirit and the Letter*, Augustine asserts that 'to consent to God's call . . . is the act of one's own will' (*spir. et litt.* 34.60), he is proclaiming

[22] Cf. *De peccatorum meritis* 2.19.32; *Contra duas epist. Pelag.* 1.2.5; 1.10.22; 1.13.27; 2.9.21.

[23] J. Burnaby, *Amor Dei: A Study of the Religion of St Augustine* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938), 222. Burnaby's discussion of grace and reward in Augustine (op. cit., 219–252) is brilliantly perceptive.

[24] Cf. G. Bonner, '*Libido* and *Concupiscentia* in St Augustine', *Studia Patristica* **6** (=*Texte und Untersuchungen* 81) (1963), 303–314.

[25] Burnaby, op. cit. (above n. 23), 231. Rist, art. cit. (above n. 12), 434–440, argues for the irresistible function of grace in Augustine's theory.

his own particular brand of determinism, a determinism which he believes to be compatible with human freedom. Here, and elsewhere in his writings, he is putting forward the view which J. B. Mozley succinctly summarizes: 'consent is . . . the necessary mode in which the will receives a gift'. But Mozley's conclusion is unavoidable: 'to say that the will must consent in order to receive, is nothing more than to say that the will must receive when it receives'.[26] Augustine is aware of the paradoxical nature of his claim, and expresses it in the paradox that grace enables us to escape from the freedom to sin, which is, in fact, a form of slavery, so that we may enjoy true freedom, which is willing and obedient slavery to the will of God (*Enchiridion* 30).

* * *

I should now like to turn from consideration of Augustine's views to an examination of their cogency. What are the underlying philosophical principles and assumptions of Augustine's doctrine? Is it a philosophically tenable doctrine? I shall begin by returning to a text which I referred to earlier, the passage in the work *On the Grace of Christ* in which Augustine counters Pelagius' description of freedom of choice as 'a power to take either side'. Augustine is, in effect, arguing there against the conception of freedom later known as liberty of indifference, the ability to do otherwise, to do or not to do X, or to do X while being able to do its opposite. The ground of Augustine's objection to liberty of indifference is that 'it has established one and the same root of good and evil', that is to say, that it posits the same cause of opposite effects. I do not think that Mozley is right to suggest that Augustine is here using substantially the same argument as that of the eighteenth-century Calvinist theologian Jonathan Edwards in his book *Freedom of the Will*.[27] Edwards is arguing, against the theory of liberty of indifference, that an act of choice cannot be simultaneous with a state of indifference.[28] Augustine is arguing that the same cause cannot produce opposite effects. But it may be that Augustine and Edwards share substantially the same theory of mental causation. Does Augustine, like Edwards, believe in causally effective volitions, which are the necessary antecedent mental events that make actions voluntary? That would appear to be the implication of his argument against Pelagius in *On the Grace of Christ*. But such a possible interpretation of Augustine's argument in that one passage is not an adequate demon-

[26] J. B. Mozley, *A Treatise on the Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination* (London: John Murray, 1855), 241.

[27] Mozley, op. cit., 228.

[28] J. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, P. Ramsey (ed.) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 190–212.

stration of Augustine's dependence upon a theory of causally effective volitions. Further evidence must be adduced.

One of the most extended discussions of willing in practice in the writings of Augustine is his account of his state of mind in the time immediately prior to his conversion in Book Eight of the *Confessions*. There Augustine distinguishes between the will to perform bodily actions, such as walking or beating his forehead, and the power or ability to perform them: I might will to walk but be unable to do so because I am ill or tied up (*conf.* 8.8.20). The bodily action, if accomplished, is an effect of willing it: 'I did it because I willed to' (ibid.).[29] Augustine makes a further distinction between actions of this kind and mental activities where will and power coincide, where to will is to perform. In acts of this latter kind (of which Augustine's will to devote himself to God is the pre-eminent relevant example) the willing appears to be both cause and effect, for it is through and in the act of choice that the voluntary action is realized. The act is one and the same thing or event as the choice of the act (*conf.* 8.9.21). Yet in his discussion of this second kind of act Augustine none the less uses the same language as is used in the account of the first kind. He speaks of distinguishable causes and effects: 'The mind commands the mind to will, the mind is itself, but it does not do it . . . it does not totally will' (ibid.). Now clearly the willing agent here is not external to the mind, for it is the mind itself. It is not separable in the way that the mind is separable from the body in Augustine's account of the first kind of actions. But Augustine is none the less suggesting that there is a 'commanding' power whose commands can be inefficacious, that is, not have the desired effect. The implication of this language is that willing is analogous to doing. This second type of behaviour is frustrated action, if it is unsuccessful, and completed action, if it succeeds. Now Augustine, as we have seen, does not regard the will as a faculty that makes decisions. Moreover, he can speak of two or more wills in conflict in one person: these conflicting wills may be all good, or all bad, or a mixture of both good and bad. One mind may be 'torn' by such diverse wills (*conf.* 8.10.24). But even if he does not consider the will to be a decision-making faculty, and postulates a plurality of possible wills active in one person in any situation, he none the less identifies the kind of mental process or activity called willing as a process with a causal function. And, as has been seen, he distinguishes, in the case of mental processes such as the willing of his own conversion, between willing and execution, cause and effect.

[29] This and the following citations from the *Confessions* are in F. J. Sheed's translation (London: Sheed & Ward, 1944), 135–139.

Now it might be argued that Augustine appears to say that frustrated acts of the will of the second kind are not acts of the will at all, and that that is the reason why nothing is achieved. He does say that the mind 'does not totally will', and that the will, therefore, 'does not in its fullness give the command' (*conf.* 8.9.21). But his language also suggests an activity of willing: 'It commands in so far as it wills . . . what it commands is not done' (ibid.). His use of such terms as 'command', 'do', 'disobey' indicates that he considers this activity to be one of frustrated intention, rather than absence of intention. His willing may be inadequate, but it is willing none the less. What he appears to be describing is weakness of will, as that concept is understood by Aristotle or Ryle: 'I was frantic in mind, in a frenzy of indignation at myself for not going over to your Law and your Covenant, O my God, when all my bones cried out that I should be, extolling it to the skies' (*conf.* 8.8.19).[30]

The implication of this account of Augustine's discussion of willing in the *Confessions* is that, even if he does not subscribe to the same theory of action as that found in Locke or Edwards, he none the less subscribes to the same assumptions about the causation of voluntary actions. Willing is an event which may give rise to a free action, and free actions are caused by the will.

A consequence of these assumptions is that Augustine, like Edwards, needs to identify a cause of acts of the will, for willing is not self-determining. But Augustine, unlike Edwards, does not appear to be aware of the infinite regress inherent in the theory of liberty of indifference, if that theory is assumed to entail a concept of causally effective volitions.[31] In fact, he is not totally opposed to the liberty of indifference notion. He may reject his version of it in his early work *On Free Choice*, but it presumably applies to Adam in Paradise before the Fall. He cannot, therefore, have cogent grounds for rejecting its tenability *per se*. But it does not square with the facts of the psychology of fallen humanity. Our wills can never in this earthly existence have the neutrality which the theory of indifference seems to entail for Augustine. Our wills are always either good or bad, and even the good wills of the elect can only remain so through the gift of perseverance. Augustine's analysis of human psychology more than halfway meets his interpretation of the Christian doctrines of grace and election.

[30] Cf. *conf.* 8.9.21: '. . . partly to will, partly not to will . . . a sickness of the soul to be so weighted down by custom that it cannot wholly rise even with the support of truth'. Weakness of will: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.1–10; G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), 67–72.

[31] See A. Kenny, *The God of the Philosophers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 83–85, for a brief discussion of Edwards's arguments.

We have seen that Augustine attempts to preserve freedom of the will, even if fallen man cannot reject divine grace. Mozley considers Augustine's talk of free will to be a description of a mode, rather than a source, of action, and he suggests that, for Augustine, the will is a mediate, and not a first cause, of action.[32] In fact, Augustine's view of free will amounts to liberty of spontaneity. It is not so much the ability to do otherwise, as the ability to act free of compulsion or constraint. Augustine, like Luther, allows such spontaneity to human action, even if, unlike Luther, he argues that such a will is free.

Are Augustine's assertions of this freedom mere words, a metaphorical form of expressing the vision of the elect as slaves of God? Is Rist right to conclude that Augustine's man is 'a puppet', who enjoys no freedom in any acceptable sense of the term?[33] I should like to suggest, at the conclusion of this paper, that this is not the only philosophically legitimate reading of Augustine's ideas. Anthony Kenny has argued for the compatibility of freedom with determinism.[34] The power of alternative action, which constitutes genuine freedom, can, he suggests, be present even when it may be predetermined, for example physiologically, that it will not, in fact, be exercised. This power involves both the ability and the opportunity to act. Let us apply Kenny's argument to the case of a recipient of divine grace, one of the elect. Even with grace, he will have the ability, in Kenny's sense of the term, to act otherwise. For if he wanted to sin, and there was an opportunity to do so, he would sin, even if, in fact, he is not now sinning. Furthermore, Augustine's predestined man may possess the opportunity to sin, provided that nothing independent of his own wants prevents him from sinning, even if he does not make use of that opportunity by sinning. So Augustine's *praedestinatus* has the power to commit sin, as an alternative to being good, even when it is predetermined that this power will not be exercised.

This argument may, if it is tenable, save freedom in a deterministic system. Augustine's position is, perhaps, not so philosophically unrespectable after all. But, as Kenny points out, to accept the compatibility of freedom with determinism in this manner is to make it difficult to avoid the consequence that God is responsible for sin. Even if we maintain that not all that happens in the world is determined by God, God cannot escape responsibility for states of affairs brought about voluntarily, if not intentionally, by him. The distinction between causing and permitting would not, then, be possible to maintain with

[32] Mozley, op. cit. (above n. 26), 242, 244–245.

[33] Rist, art. cit. (above n. 12), 440.

[34] A. Kenny, *Will, Freedom and Power* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), 145–61; Kenny, op. cit. (above n. 31), 85–86, summarizes his argument.

application to God.[35] Augustine, as we have seen, regards Adam's choice as permitted rather than caused by God, and so sin as occurring against, but not apart from, God's will. But that indeterminist position fits ill with his deterministic account of the operation of grace. A philosophical defence of Augustine's notion of freedom of the will seems impossible: it remains a glorious and influential failure. His graphic late accounts of the conversion of Paul and his own conversion, which minimize the role of the human will, may reflect a position that he would not have cared to admit.

[35] Kenny, op. cit. (above n. 31), 86–87.

Hierarchies in Augustine's Thought*

. . . when we consider the infinite power and wisdom of the Maker, we have reason to think that it is suitable to the magnificent harmony of the universe and the great design and infinite goodness of the Architect that the species *of creatures should also, by gentle degrees, ascend upward from us toward his infinite perfection, as we see they gradually descend from us downwards . . .*

John Locke[1]

LOCKE'S BRIEF and clear description of the hierarchical world-view gives expression to a concept that seemed as probable to him in the seventeenth century as it seemed certain to almost all philosophers, scientists, and theologians of antiquity, from the Presocratics to Gregory the Great.[2] It was the Christian Neoplatonist known as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite who, at the end of the fifth or beginning of the sixth century, appears to have been the first to apply the term ἱεραρχία to the notion of the graded structure of the universe. The term may have been used in religious contexts in the pre-Christian era, at least in Asia Minor, in the sense of "presidency of sacred rites."[3] But the idea of graded levels of being or reality had long been expressed in other words: a tradition beginning with Plato can be discerned. Plato employs pairs of terms, such as "earlier"–"later," or the value terms "better"–"worse," or chronological metaphors such as "older"–"younger," as well as space metaphors for ascent, to convey

*An earlier version of this paper was delivered at the International Congress on Augustine held in Rome in September 1986.

1. J. Locke, *An essay concerning human understanding,* III, vi, 12 (ed. J. W. Yolton [London, 1961], ii, 50).

2. The classic survey is A. O. Lovejoy, *The great chain of being: a study of the history of an idea* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936).

3. See *Dig.* 27, 1, 6, 14 and Th. Mommsen's comment *ad loc.*, but cf. the sceptical remarks of C. G. Brandis, art. "Asiarches," *RE* 2 (1896), 1575, and H. Peters, "Zur Schrift Modestins *Paraitēsis epitropēs kai kouratorias,*" *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 33 (1912), 511–13. A dating of *IG* 14, 697 about 500 A.D. is possible, but not demonstrable (cf. *CIG* 4, 8668).

the concept of hierarchy.[4] In Middle Platonist and Neoplatonic authors the terminology of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics is adopted and extended. The notion of levels as "steps" is conveyed by βαθμοί (or ὑποβάθρα, ἐπιβάθρα); that of order by τάξις (and σύνταξις, σύνταγμα, etc.); a term like ἐφεξῆς expresses the continuity of the hierarchical scheme; and other terms used include σειρά, διακόσμησις (or διάκοσμος and θεσμός, emphasizing the notions of the chain of being, or ordering, and of divine ordinance).[5] Latin equivalents of most of these terms are found in Augustine, in greater numbers than in Latin writers before him.[6] They include: *gradus, ordo* (*ordinare, ordinatio*), *dispositio* (*disponere*), *distributio* (*distribuere*), *series, scala,* and *catena.* The transliteration *hierarchia* appears first in Carolingian translations of Pseudo-Dionysius.[7]

In this paper I shall first attempt to present in summary form the range and scope of the hierarchical schemes in Augustine, referring to passages where the above-mentioned terms are used, but not confining myself to them. I shall then suggest various antecedents to which Augustine appears to be indebted.[8] Finally, I shall examine a single scheme more closely, and consider its implications, and the implications of hierarchical structures in general, for Augustine's thought.

I

The Augustinian concept of *ordo* is the generic notion within which the more particular concept of hierarchy may be situated. Hierarchy is a vertical order, so to speak; but order can also have a horizontal dimension, perceptible within one level of reality. The stars are, for example, one such kind of horizontal order for Augustine.[9] When, therefore, he wishes to define order, Augustine refers to both its horizontal and its hierarchical aspects.[10] Everything that exists is ordered

4. See D. J. O'Meara, *Structures hiérarchiques dans la pensée de Plotin* (Leiden, 1975), 9–16; G. Vlastos, *Platonic studies* (Princeton, N.J., 1973), 58–75.

5. See O'Meara (above, n.4), 1–5, 19–32; S. Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena* (Leiden, 1978), 141–53.

6. In the following account use has been made of the computerized concordance of Augustine's writings at Würzburg University.

7. See Gersh (above, n.5), 152f.

8. A full survey of the tradition of hierarchical schemes in ancient and early Christian thought is provided by my article "Hierarchie," *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum,* Lieferung 113 (1989), 41–73.

9. *En.Ps.* 58, 1, 14; 91, 3. Throughout this article the abbreviations of titles of Augustine's works are those adopted in the *Augustinus-Lexikon,* i, 1/2 (Basle/Stuttgart, 1986), xlii–xliv.

10. *Civ.* 19, 13. See J. Rief, *Der Ordobegriff des jungen Augustinus* (Paderborn, 1962), 128–41.

in these two respects. Augustine never tires of evoking the graded order of the creation, the *ordo naturae,* which extends from the immortal and rational angels, to rational but mortal humans, and then to animals, who, like humans, are sentient beings, but are irrational; then follows the level of vegetative life (trees, plants, and so forth), which is life without reason or sentience. At the lowest level is lifeless, bodily substance.[11]

God is both distinct from, and part of, this hierarchy. As its transcendent creator, whose providence extends throughout his creation, he is other than that creation, immutable where it is, even at its highest, rational level, subject to change.[12] But he is also the first term of the scale of being, the necessarily existent, most perfect, and most uniform being at the apex. Thus Augustine can often refer to the sequences God-angels-men-plants-inanimate objects; or, God-man-animal; or, God-soul-body; or, God-mind-flesh.[13] Humans, made in God's image, are a mean term in the hierarchy between God on the one hand, and creation, with its fainter traces or *vestigia* of God, on the other hand.[14] Or humans can be envisaged as a liminal type of being, between God's eternity and the purely temporal order.[15] More particularly, the mean or central place of man in the hierarchy can be observed in the fact that he alone shares the characteristics of all the other levels: for man alone, as distinct from angels, animals, plants, and inanimate things, is rational, and sentient, and alive, and corporeal.[16] And, as we shall see later, the human, rational soul is characterized by its middle state, its *medietas.*

Creation can be compared with a household, its master, and its different levels of servants.[17] This hierarchical order is not static, at least not for humans: even if they, as rational beings with free will, are intrinsically superior to irrational beings without free will, their souls and wills can situate them on a level below that which is appro-

11. *Ord.* 1, 18; 2, 11; *conf.* 7, 7; 12, 4; 12, 30; *trin.* 3, 14; *Gn. litt.* 4, 5; 5, 7; *civ.* 7, 30; 11, 16; *c. Prisc.* 9; *c. Faust.* 21, 5; *c. adv. leg.* 1, 6–9; *ep.* 205, 17; *en. Ps.* 99, 5; 148, 10; *s. Lambot* 10; *lib. arb.* 3, 15f.; 3, 24; *c. Fel.* 2, 4; *c. ep. Man.* 25; *Simpl.* 1,2, 8.

12. See G. J. P. O'Daly, art. "Aeternitas," *Augustinus-Lexikon,* i (above, n.9), 159–64. The sequence intellectual-animal-corporeal creation reflects the Trinity as *esse-species-ordo*: *vera rel.* 13.

13. *Civ.* 5, 11; 8, 6; *en. Ps.* 144, 13; *Gn. c. Man.* 2, 22; *Io. ev. tr.* 23, 6; *trin.* 12, 16; *ep.* 140, 3; *s. Morin* 11, 12; *cath. fr.* 67; *gest. Pel.* 18.

14. *Civ.* 11, 28.

15. E.g. *Gn. litt.* 3, 22.

16. *Civ.* 5, 11.

17. *En. Ps.* 103, 4, 10; cf. the comparison of the rule of the human soul over its subordinate body with a *res publica*: *Io. ev. tr.* 8, 2.

priate to their nature.[18] Sin, although a consequence of pride and a perverse desire to imitate God's omnipotence, in fact results in a fall to a lower order of creation: the soul, as Augustine vividly says, "becomes bodily" (*corporascit*) in its too eager inclination to the bodily level—even if, as he immediately adds, it does not become a body.[19] But the soul can recover, can rise or ascend, both to its proper level and to God. And this ascent is, in turn, achieved by degrees—by means of faith, or *auctoritas*, or Scripture, or sacraments—leading to a vision or understanding of transcendent truth.[20] Sin and evil do not destroy the order of creation: even if all the angels were to rebel, that order would not be jeopardized.[21] One may, indeed, consider whether universal order does not render necessary the existence of evil: at any rate, evil enhances the excellence of what is good, and has its proper place in the scheme of things.[22] The devil and his angels are relatively good; even the absence of positive qualities takes the form of an ordered sequence.[23] So strong is the gradual structure of reality that Augustine can on one occasion even go so far as to say that a chain (*catena*) appears to link God, via his creatures, angels and men, to evil.[24]

Even within the level of the inanimate elements there are degrees: the elements are ordered in a sequence related to their purported weight, from lightest to heaviest—fire, air, water, earth; they form a *catenata series*.[25] The animals are hierarchically distributed according to the graded elements.[26] And the five senses are likewise related to the four elements: fire—or rather light—to sight; pure air to hearing; the vaporous air of the atmosphere to smell; moisture to taste; earth

18. *Gn. litt.* 3, 16; 8, 23; *s. dom. m.* 1, 34; 2, 51; *c. Fel.* 2, 4; *trin.* 12, 16; *vera rel.* 38.

19. *C. Sec.* 11. On pride see D. J. Macqueen, "Contemptus Dei: St Augustine on the disorder of pride in society, and its remedies," *Recherches Augustiniennes* 9 (1973), 227–93. Corrupt x may be better than incorrupt y, if x belongs to a higher ontological level: *nat. b.* 3; 5; 8.

20. *Civ.* 8, 6; *trin.* 8, 4; *mus.* 6, 1; *vera rel.* 47; 52–57; *conf.* 10, 12; *Io. ev. tr.* 22, 2; *s.* 126, 1–4; *util. cred.* 24; 34; *f. et symb.* 24; *c. Adim.* 8 (cf. *div. qu.* 53, 1–4; *mor.* 2, 9).

21. *Lib. arb.* 3, 32; 3, 35. For degrees of sin see *s. dom. m.* 1, 21–24; 1, 35; *civ.* 1, 41; *en. Ps.* 52, 3. Unorthodox interpretations of scripture are degrees of descent to spiritual death: *Io. ev. tr.* 59, 2.

22. *Ord.* 1, 18; *ench.* 11.

23. *Retr.* 1, 14, 10; *Gn. litt. inp.* 5.

24. *Duab. an.* 10.

25. *Civ.* 8, 21; *lib. arb.* 3, 13 (degrees within individual elements); *s.* 241, 2. For Plato's series cf. *civ.* 8, 15.

26. *S.* 141, 2.

to touch.[27] This fine scheme embarrasses Augustine somewhat, however, when Platonist critics of Christianity argue that the law of the natural weight of the elements appears to invalidate the concept of the heavenly resurrected body.[28]

Where the Middle Platonist Apuleius stresses the mediating role of demons between gods and men, Augustine substitutes for Apuleian demons the good angels; but, unlike the demons, who in Apuleius are situated in an intermediate airy medium between the ethereal divine and earthly human spheres, angels in Augustine have no particular elemental or corporeal medium. If they are superior to us, it is a moral and not a local superiority, though they can be called heavenly creatures, like the Apuleian gods.[29] The true mediator between God and man, however, is for Augustine rather Christ incarnate.[30]

The degrees of the universe are degrees of goodness, of beauty, of unity.[31] This is a cardinal Augustinian thesis. Even if *aequalitas* is characteristic of the beauty of an individual entity, or of a related group of entities at one level (horizontal order), the very *inaequalitas* of graded good things constitutes the perfection of a whole of which individual parts may be imperfect.[32] Things may be beautiful in themselves, as well as in relation to other terms in the hierarchy.[33] And this order of degrees of beauty, or goodness, or being, is a finite series.[34]

I have now surveyed what I believe to be the main hierarchical structures in Augustine's thought. I add some no less important, but less prevalent schemes.

Augustine makes occasional use of a traditional historical scheme, inspired by scripture, of the ages "before the law," "under the law," "under grace," and "in peace." He can relate this scheme to the individual's gradual progress towards salvation, combining it with the typology of the stages of human life. Or he can use it to highlight the different degrees of perfection of Judaism and Christianity, even if this

27. *Gn. litt.* 3, 4; 3, 9f.; 12, 16.

28. *Civ.* 22, 11; *s.* 242, 5; 242, 8.

29. *Civ.* 8, 14; 8, 23; 8, 25; 9, 7; 9, 13; 9, 18; *Gn. litt.* 3, 9. For the sequence angels-faithful-infidels see *util. ieiun.* 2.

30. *Trin.* 13, 24; *s.* 293, 7f.; *civ.* 9, 15; *pecc. mer.* 2, 38. The sequence Christ-Paul (imitator of Christ)-man (imitator of Paul) is unique: *en. Ps.* 39, 6.

31. *C. Prisc.* 9; *c. Sec.* 10; 19; *ep.* 18, 2; *an. quant.* 80; *Gn. c. Man.* 2, 43; *s. dom. m.* 1, 34; *civ.* 12, 6; *c. adv. leg.* 1, 8; *en. Ps.* 148, 3; 148, 9; 148, 10; *s.* 50, 5; 241, 2; *nat. b.* 1; *cont.* 23.

32. *Gn. c. Man.* 2, 43; *c. adv. leg.* 1, 6. See W. Beierwaltes, "Aequalitas numerosa: Zu Augustins Begriff des Schönen," *Weisheit und Wissenschaft* 38 (1975), 140–57.

33. *S. dom. m.* 1, 34; cf. *s.* 12, 10.

34. *C. ep. Man.* 25.

hierarchical interpretation gives way to Augustine's more pointed contrast between the saved and the damned.[35] The *rhetor* Augustine considers the *ordo studendi,* proceeding from grammar to dialectic and rhetoric, and then to music, geometry, and astronomy; and this educational progress corresponds to the ascent of the soul from things bodily to things incorporeal.[36] The arithmologist Augustine is concerned with the privileged role of the Tetrakys in all numerical structures, and with the grading of the five kinds of number which he identifies in Book Six of *De musica.*[37] The political thinker Augustine incorporates the stages of social organization—house-city-world—into his analysis of the nature and necessity of peace; and he considers the phenomenon of peace to form itself a hierarchical series, extending from the peace of the body to that of the heavenly city and of all things.[38] Justice is graded, and temporal justice is a mean between eternal justice and temporal evil.[39]

Finally, two special motifs are to be mentioned. One is that of Jacob's ladder, "set up on the earth, and the top of it [reaching] . . . to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it" (Gen. 28:12). Augustine's interpretations of this verse often relate it to Christ's words in John 1:51: "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." This leads to an exegesis that is not, strictly speaking, hierarchical, but which, rather, concentrates on the Incarnation of Christ, on Christ as *sursum* and *deorsum,* and on the Church.[40] But some passages suggest that the ascending and descending angels represent the evangelists, or scripture in general, that is to say, intermediaries between the truth and the believer,[41] and at least two passages see the ladder as a symbol of spiritual progress, the ascent of the inner man, or the *affectus bonae voluntatis.*[42] In general, however, Augustine ap-

35. *Exp. prop. Rm.* 13–18; cf. *trin.* 4, 7; *s. dom. m.* 1, 70; *div. qu.* 66, 7; *exp. Gal.* 46; 61. See F. E. Cranz, "The development of Augustine's ideas on society before the Donatist controversy," *Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954), 255–316, especially 279–82.

36. E.g. *retr.* 1, 3, 1; cf. *ord. passim.* See R. Lorenz, "Die Wissenschaftslehre Augustins," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 67 (1955/6), 29–60; 213–51.

37. *Mus.* 1, 26; 6, 6–16.

38. *Civ.* 19, 7; 19, 13.

39. *Op. mon.* 27f.; *s.* 159, 2; 159, 7; *cons. ev.* 1, 53.

40. *Civ.* 16, 38; *cath. fr.* 13f.; *en. Ps.* 44, 20; 122, 2; 122, 5; *s.* 89, 5.

41. *C. Faust,* 12, 26; *en. Ps.* 119, 2; *Io. ev. tr.* 7, 23.

42. *En. Ps.* 38, 2; 119, 2. For a possible subliminal use of the motif see *s.* 38, 9. For the *scalae* of Perpetua's ascent into heaven: *s.* 280, 1. The Jacob's ladder motif as eschatological symbol of the soul's ascent is found in Origen, *c. Cels.* 6, 21 (cf. Philo, *somn.* 1, 133–56).

pears to be inhibited from interpreting the Genesis verse purely in terms of ascent by the fact that it also refers to descent: thus descent can be seen to symbolize the witness to the truth that one has come to grasp through spiritual progress.[43]

The other motif is suggested by the name *canticum graduum* given to each of the psalms 119 to 133. Although he is aware of the interpretation given by the linking of these fifteen "gradual" psalms to the fifteen steps of the Temple, Augustine more often than not interprets the motif of the steps as referring to the ascent towards *beatitudo,* or spiritual ascent in general; or to Christ's descent and ascent as the means to our ascent, and so to *humilitas* as the precondition of salvation.[44] This ascent is an "ascent in the heart . . . the more you love, the more you will ascend."[45]

II

Augustine's hierarchical schemes are part of a tradition, to which he is indebted. The sequences god-man-animal and man-animal-plant are found in the Presocratics Alcmaeon and Philolaus,[46] becoming thereafter so general that we may assume that Augustine knows them from several sources. The sequences immutable-mutable and rational-corporeal are Platonic, in the most general sense of that term;[47] and Augustine's numerological speculation is Platonic-Neopythagorean in origin, whatever his immediate source. He also knows Plato's tripartite division of soul into rational, spirited, and desiring aspects or "parts," even if he cannot accommodate it satisfactorily to his psychology.[48] More specifically Aristotelian (even if Augustine tells us that he knows it from Varro) is the scale of soul powers (vegetative-sentient-rational),[49] and the concept of a scale of beings ranging from man (or, indeed, from a mind higher than man's) to the elements. Augustine does not appear to be aware of Aristotle's *scala naturae,* his hierarchy of animal types, at least not in any stringent sense; but he is an heir

43. *En. Ps.* 119, 2.

44. *En. Ps.* 89, 10 (Temple steps); *conf.* 9, 2; 13, 10; *trin.* 11, 10; *c. litt. Pet.* 2, 195; cf. *en. Ps.* 38, 2; 38, 4; 118, 8, 5; 119, 1–3; 119, 6f.; 120, 1f.; 120, 4f.; 120, 14; 121–27; 129; 131; 150.

45. *En. Ps.* 83, 10.

46. Alcmaeon, B 1-1a DK; Philolaos, B 13 DK.

47. See H. Wagner, "Die Schichtentheoreme bei Platon, Aristoteles und Plotin," *Studium Generale* 9 (1956), 283–91, especially 283–87.

48. *Civ.* 14, 19. Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* 1.20 is a possible source.

49. *Civ.* 7, 23; 7, 29. For the possible Posidonian background of these texts see W. Theiler, *Poseidonios: Die Fragmente* (Berlin/New York, 1982), ii, 262f.

to Aristotle's notion of the natural weight and order and cosmic place of each of the elements.[50] Augustine knows of the Stoic causal nexus, but does not, of course, adopt its fatalistic implications.[51] Otherwise, he is indebted to the Stoics for those hierarchical schemes that they share *mutatis mutandis* with Aristotle and the Peripatetics: the sequences inorganic-plant-animal-mind (or reason), and the sequence of the elements.[52] The Stoic Posidonius may be the antecedent of Augustine's insistence upon the harmony and coherence of the universe, and of the hierarchy god-man-animal-plant.[53] In the Middle Platonists the theory of an intermediary between the highest principle and the universe, including man, is predominant: for example, Philo's Logos, Plutarch's Logos, Albinus' cosmic Mind, to which one may add the Neopythagorean Numenius' Demiurge. Apuleius' Middle Platonic demons have already been mentioned.[54] These Middle Platonic influences, however much modified, are of paramount importance for Augustine.

The Neoplatonic schemes, hierarchical par excellence, are also important. But it should not be forgotten that Augustine, though he is aware that Plotinus wrote a treatise on the three hypostases,[55] is not inclined to exploit the concept of Plotinian One, which transcends Being, apart from two isolated passages in the early *De ordine*.[56] On the other hand, the themes of descent and ascent, that is, the dynamic aspects of the Neoplatonic hierarchy,[57] are central to his thought. He would have been impressed by Porphyry's attribution of Being and Life to the One *qua* absolute Being, if that is what Porphyry taught;[58] and he was certainly influenced by the Porphyrian theorems of the scale of being, and of the goodness of all beings in a relative, graded sense.[59] I shall shortly note a further possible Porphyrian influence on Augustine's degrees of soul powers. I know of no specifically Christian (or purely Christian) influence on Augustine's hierarchical schemes,

50. For hierarchical schemes in Aristotle see H. Happ, "Die *Scala naturae* und die Schichtung des Seelischen bei Aristoteles," *Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte und deren Nachleben* = Festschrift für Franz Altheim (Berlin, 1969), i, 220–44.

51. E.g. *civ.* 5, 8; cf. *SVF* 912–27.

52. *SVF* 2, 458–62; 558–73; 714–16; 988f.; 1013; 1152–67.

53. See K. Reinhardt, art. "Poseidonios," *RE* 22 (1953), 662; 758–63; 766–68; 773–78; fr. 309a; 359 Theiler.

54. See in general J. Dillon, *The middle Platonists* (London, 1977).

55. *Civ.* 10, 23.

56. *Ord.* 2, 16; 2, 26.

57. See R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism* (London, 1972), *passim*.

58. See P. Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* (Paris, 1968), i, 147–344.

59. See W. Theiler, *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus* (Berlin, 1966), 172–212; 224–29.

although antitheses such as *spiritus-caro* have scriptural sources; and Arian subordinationism, as well as the (not strictly speaking Christian) Manichaean hierarchies, will have reinforced his assumption that the universe is hierarchical, and that the truth is not the demolition of hierarchical schemes as such, so much as the replacement of the wrong type of hierarchy by the approved version.[60]

III

I turn now to consider one scheme in more detail. It is that unique attempt to provide a comprehensive account of the different levels of psychological functions, the description of the seven *gradus* of soul in *De animae quantitate* 70–76. The first two stages are the levels of vegetative and sentient life, and this suggests that a basic Aristotelian pattern underlies Augustine's schemes, for stages 3 to 7 are devoted to the rational faculty. But these stages include the theme of moral as well as of intellectual progress. Stage 3, discursive reason, is, for example, employed in social and political behavior. Stage 4 is more explicitly ethical: moral evaluation based upon acceptance of authority (but it is also a degree of knowledge). Stage 5 is the level of moral perfection aspired to in stage 4. Stage 6 is the mind's desire to know the highest truths; stage 7 is the secure knowledge of those truths. Note that the sequence of moral struggle and success corresponds in the last four stages to the levels of intellectual aspiration and achievement.

Augustine clearly regards the seven *gradus* as a hierarchical series reflecting the various levels of soul. But he insists that the sevenfold division is not intended to be a hard and fast one: it could take other forms.[61] Nor is the scheme symmetrical, for stages 1 and 2 each represent distinct types of soul or soul power, whereas stages 3 to 7 distinguish activities and states of the one, rational faculty. Much of the detail of these levels is common ground in post-Aristotelian philosophy, and a specific course should not, perhaps, be sought.[62] The sevenfold scheme, particularly in relation to moral and intellectual progress, is a favorite of Augustine's, occurring in *De vera religione* and in *De doctrina christiana*, as well as in the interpretation of the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount in *De sermone domini in*

60. Arian subordinationism: *c.s. Arrian.* 5; 9; 19; 31; *s.* 264, 7; *en. Ps.* 130, 11; *conl. Max.* 5; 9. Manichaean hierarchies: *c. ep. Man.* 29; *nat. b.* 44.

61. *An. quant.* 79.

62. But cf. Cicero, *nat. deor.* 2, 33–36 [= Posidonius, fr. 359 Th.]; *fin.* 5, 39f.; *Tusc. disp.* 5, 37–39.

monte and elsewhere.[63] Neoplatonic hierarchies of virtues, especially the fourfold scheme of Porphyry, with its levels of political, purificatory, contemplative, and paradigmatic virtue,[64] may have been influential. But the details do not correspond to Augustine's scheme: where are the paradigmatic virtues in Augustine?

There is, however, a closer parallel to Augustine in a Porphyry passage not, to my knowledge, hitherto adduced. The four levels of mind and soul in the *ad Gaurum* are of considerable interest to the Augustine scholar.[65] These levels are: i) intellect; ii) discursive reason; iii) the irrational part = the desiring part = the opining and the imaginative and sentient soul; iv) the vegetative soul. What is striking about this sequence is the way in which it combines the levels of vegetative and sentient soul with differentiated aspects of the rational soul as discursive and higher reason, as in our Augustine text. Porphyry might well have used this scheme elsewhere, in a text among those known to Augustine.

A characteristic Augustinian feature of the scheme in *De animae quantitate* is its combination of the static and dynamic aspects of the hierarchical structure. That is, of course, also a typically Neoplatonic feature. Yet it was implied many years ago by Pierre Hadot that the emphasis of Augustinian thought is not essentially Neoplatonic in tendency.[66] Hadot was comparing the expositions of the doctrine of the Trinity in Augustine and Marius Victorinus. Victorinus elucidates the concept of the consubstantiality of the three divine persons of the Trinity by means of its image in the ternary structure of the human soul, that is, its being, life, and understanding. But Victorinus is primarily concerned with the soul as an ontological reality. It is as an image of divine substance, and hence of the structure of being, that it is investigated. Augustine also identifies ternary schemes in the soul, and these schemes are analogous to the divine Trinity, of which the soul is the image. But in Augustine the schemes (such as, for example, mind, knowledge, love) remain psychological. They are not, so to speak, translated into ontological or metaphysical terms. As Hadot says: "Augustine can only think of the Trinity by contemplating it in the mirror of the self."[67]

63. *S. dom. m.* 1, 10–12; *ep.* 171a, 1f.; *s.* 347, 2f.; *en. Ps.* 11,7; *vera rel.* 49; *doctr. chr.* 2, 10–12.

64. Porphyry, *sent*, 32 (p. 25, 10–27, 2 Lamberz).

65. Porphyry, *ad Gaur.*, p. 42f. Kalbfleisch: see W. Deuse, *Untersuchungen zur mittelplatonischen und neuplatonischen Seelenlehre* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 167–235.

66. P. Hadot, "L'image de la Trinité dans l'âme chez Victorinus et chez saint Augustin," *Studia Patristica* 6 (1962), 409–42.

67. Hadot, art. cit., 441.

Now it has been seen that Augustine shares with philosophers in the Stoic and Platonic traditions the assumptions that reality is ordered and that divine being and the human mind have particular places in that order. This ontological dimension of his thought, so abundantly documented, cannot be ignored. And yet it is no less distinctive of Augustine's philosophy of mind that he approaches psychological questions through an elucidation of man's perceptive and cognitive activities, independently of any ontological implications these may have. He is not primarily concerned with the traditional theme of the relation between mind and the structure of reality. As a result, his psychology, as Albrecht Dihle has recently shown in a discussion of his concept of will, is

> self-sustaining, at least with regard to man's intellectual activity. One need not understand any attached or underlying conception of the order of being to appreciate his ideas about the intellectual life of man. Both the raw material of cognition and the drive towards understanding can be found in the soul without an indispensable point of reference in the outside world.[68]

Is there, then, an irreconcilable dichotomy between Augustine's ontology and his approach to psychological problems? Or, one might add, between his ontology and his ethics—for Augustine's concept of intellectual activity is never morally neutral. Ragnar Holte undertook to show that Augustine's ethical theory is irrevocably based on an ontological order that is hierarchical.[69] But Holte's thesis does not do justice to the dynamism of Augustine's concept of will as the motor of human activity. In criticizing Holte, Oliver O'Donovan has demonstrated that we cannot eliminate what he calls the positivist aspect of his ethical thought.[70] There is, as Augustine himself says,

> the scale according to the order of nature; but there is another way of valuing things, based on the use that each individual has for them. . . . Rational consideration (*ratio*) decides on the position of each thing in the scale of importance (*in rerum gradibus*) . . . whereas need (*necessitas*) thinks in terms of means to ends.[71]

68. A. Dihle, *The theory of will in classical antiquity* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 1982), 125f.

69. R. Holte, *Béatitude et sagesse* (Paris/Worcester, Mass., 1962), 233–50.

70. O. O'Donovan, *The problem of self-love in St. Augustine* (New Haven/London, 1980), 10–36.

71. *Civ.* 11, 16. The translation is taken from O'Donovan, op. cit. 15.

Need and desire can make us prefer money to fleas, or a horse to a slave, thus upsetting, so to speak, the scale of being; and these preferences need not always be wrong—food can be preferable to mice, for example.

Despite ambiguities and, it may be, an ultimate lack of systematic clarity on the links between the rational and positivistic aspects of his thought, Augustine is undoubtedly concerned with a synthesis of the two. And he often achieves this in practice. O'Donovan has shown how this happens in his attitudes to the aspects of love. The same synthesis can be observed in practice in the combination of ethical and ontological levels in the passage from *De animae quantitate,* and, in general, in Augustine's reflections on the medial position, the *medietas,* of soul. Soul cannot alter its ontological medial position. But it lives in a further dimension—of values and of the moral status consequent upon choice, where its position is changeable and is determined by its actions. Only if its choices are right will its ethical and ontological positions, so to speak, coincide. That is to say, its behavior and moral standing will reflect its proper place in the scale of being. This fundamental insight of Augustine's is masterfully epitomized in the following passage:

> Just as everything created by God, from the rational creation to the lowest body, is good, so does the rational soul act well . . . if it preserves right order, and in its discrimination, deliberation, and choice subordinates the lesser to the greater, the bodily to the spiritual, the lower to the higher, the temporal to the eternal, that it may avoid precipitating itself and its body into a worse state through neglect of higher things and desire for what is lower . . . but that it may rather, through a well ordered love (*ordinata caritate*), turn itself and its body to what is better.[72]

72. *Ep.* 140, 4.

XII

REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING IN AUGUSTINE, *CONFESSIONS* X

I

One of the most important reasons why Augustine's discussion of remembering and forgetting in Book X of the *Confessions* is such an impressive text is the vividness of its style, which conveys a dramatic sense of a mind grappling with puzzles and problems[1]. I shall be drawing attention to Augustine's use of self-interrogation and dialogue form later in this paper, but I want to begin with brief consideration of an obviously impressive stylistic feature in his account: the wealth of metaphors used to evoke memory's range and the process of remembering or recalling.

All of the metaphors are spatial, for a place that is "no place" ("interiore loco, non loco", 9,16; "et nusquam locus, et recedimus et accedimus, et nusquam locus", 26,37)[2]. Many suggest the image of a hidden recess: there is talk of memory's nooks ("recessus", 8,13) and hiding-places ("secreti ... sinus", ib.), of its hollows ("in cauis abditioribus", 10,17), of its caves ("antris et cauernis", 17,26). Some evoke the image of a building and its parts: memory is an inner room ("penetrale", 8,15; "penetralia", 11,18: this term may also refer to a secret place or inner sanctuary). Its images enter through doors ("foribus", 8,13; "ianuas", 10,17). It is the inner court or hall ("aula", 8,14) of a palace ("praetoria", 8,12), although it is tempting to see here an allusion to Virgil's description of beehives as "praetoria" (*Georgica* IV 75), in the sense of a military commander's headquarters or tent, in which case "aula" refers to its interior (cf. *Georg.* IV 90.202): other aspects of the bee(hive) metaphor will be discussed below[3]. There are images of storing, to convey the process of remembering and retention: stores ("receptaculis", 8,12; "cellis", 9,16), hoards ("thesauri", 8,12;

[1] This paper complements and extends some parts of my discussion of Augustine's views on memory in *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*, London / Berkeley, CA 1987, pp. 131–151, 199–204, 211 f. See in general G. Söhngen, "Der Aufbau der augustinischen Gedächtnislehre – Conf. X c. 6–27", in *Aurelius Augustinus, Festschrift der Görres-Gesellschaft zum 1500. Todestage des heiligen Augustinus*, ed. M. Grabmann / J. Mausbach, Köln 1930, pp. 367–394 (= *Id., Die Einheit in der Theologie*, München 1952, pp. 63–100); A. Solignac, "La mémoire selon saint Augustin", in *Les Confessions VIII–XIII* (*Œuvres de saint Augustin* 14), Paris 1962, pp. 557–567; J. Mourant, *Saint Augustine on Memory (The Saint Augustine Lecture Series)*, Villanova, Pa. 1980. I have found M. Warnock, *Memory*, London 1987, a stimulating and enlightening discussion of problems in some modern philosophical and literary accounts.

[2] Unless otherwise indicated, references are to chapter and paragraph of *Confessions* X. All quotations from the *Confessions* are taken from the Teubner edition by M. Skutella, revised by H. Jürgens and W. Schaub, Stuttgart 1969.

[3] See W. Hübner, "Die *praetoria memoriae* im zehnten Buch der *Confessiones* – Vergilisches bei Augustin", in *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 27 (1981) pp. 245–263 (here pp. 247–255).

"thesauro", 8,14)[4]. Most striking of all is the comparison of memory with a stomach and its digestive activities ("uenter ... animi", 14,21 f.). Finally, Augustine speaks of memory's tracts or open spaces ("campos", 8,12; "campis", 17,26): again, the reference in 8,12, adjacent to "praetoria", may suggest the area surrounding the "castra praetoria"[5].

In Augustine's account these metaphors pin-point the paradox in the question: where is this place that is no place? Above all, linked as they are to epithets denoting great size, extent, and number ("lata", "innumerabilium", 8,12; "grandis", "secreti atque ineffabiles", 8,13; "ingenti", 8,14; "amplum et infinitum", 8,15; "innumerabilibus atque innumerabiliter plenis innumerabilium rerum generibus", 17,26), they direct the reader to the precise nature of that paradox: how can a place that is no place contain so much? Furthermore, they suggest an answer: by the proliferation of images evoking the *inside* – of houses, caves and other recesses, and stores – Augustine is not merely stressing the obvious, that what we remember is somehow in us, but also directing the whole enquiry towards introspection, the examination of the nature of the self that leads to discovery of the truth, not merely about oneself, but also about one's source and goal, God. The tendency of the discussion in *Confessions* X implements the Neoplatonic programme defined in *De uera religione*:

> noli foras ire, in teipsum redi; in interiore homine habitat ueritas (*uera rel.* 39,72)[6].

The discovery of something that is nowhere is, for Augustine, the realization of the reality of immaterial being: an adaptation of Neoplatonic method is again evident. If God is everywhere and nowhere ("... nusquam locus ... ueritas, ubique praesides", *conf.* X 26,37), and ideas are nowhere (*uera rel.* 32,60), then both are immaterial, if distinct. The movement from self to God through introspection (*Soliloquia* I 2,7) is reflected in the progression of the argument in *Confessions* X. That argument begins with the discussion of divine nature, of what it is we love when we say we love God

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[4] Cf. Cicero, *De oratore* I 5,18: "quid dicam de thesauro rerum omnium, memoria?"; Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* XI 2,1: "... neque inmerito thesaurus hic eloquentiae dicitur". The metaphor may originate with the description (Zeno's?) of memory as θησαυρισμὸς ... φαντασιῶν criticized by Chrysippus, *SVF* II 56 = Sextus Empiricus, *aduersus mathematicos* VII 373; cf. *SVF* I 64. Augustine's use of house and room metaphors may be influenced by the use of the place system in Greek and Roman mnemonic techniques (on which see F. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, London 1965; R. Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory*, London 1972, pp. 22–34): Quintilian, *Inst. or.* XI 2,18–20, suggests the use of a house and its rooms. On the place system see (apart from Quintilian, op. cit. XI 2,17–26) *Rhetorica ad Herennium* III 16–24; Cicero, *De oratore* II 86, 353–88,360. The system does not seem to have influenced Augustine's views on memory, though it has left traces in the structure and technique of the *Confessions*: see W. Schmidt-Dengler, "Die *aula memoriae* in den *Konfessionen* des heiligen Augustinus", in *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 14 (1968) pp. 69–89; D. Doucet, "L'*Ars Memoriae* dans les *Confessions*", in ib. 33 (1987) pp. 49–69. For a typology of metaphors for memory see H. Weinrich, "Typen der Gedächtnismetaphorik", in *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 9 (1964) pp. 23–26.

[5] Hübner, "Die *praetoria memoriae*" p. 249.

[6] On this and the following point see W. Theiler, *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus*, Berlin 1966, pp. 214 f. Some similarities and differences between the Neoplatonists and Augustine are noted in O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* pp. 1 f.

(6,8–7,11), then proceeds to self-examination of the soul's various powers, focusing upon memory (8,12–27,38). But the final part of the self-examination coincides with discussion of the manner in which God is somehow in our memory (24,35–27,38). The discussion has come full circle, "gradibus ascendens ad eum" (sc. deum), (8,12); the dimensions of the self reveal what can be known about God. The complex God-self-introspection, explored in *Confessions* VII, where Augustine's encounter with Neoplatonism and its consequences are evoked, is – typically, one might say – applied in the examination of memory. If it is still necessary to argue for the unity of the *Confessions*[7], then its application of this particular introspective method throughout is one (often neglected) factor that should be stressed.

II

When Augustine turns to the details of his examination of memory, it is the variety of its processes and conditions that is explored. Augustine offers no single account of the ways in which memory works. Although the links between sense-perception, imagination, and memory are crucial to the functioning of each of those activities, inasmuch as perception involves the serial formation of mental images that are retained in the memory directly, as the perception takes place (*De musica* VI 8,21; *De Genesi ad litteram* XII 11,22; XII 16,33), and imagination is either the reproductive recollection of retained images or their creative manipulation, Augustine realizes that this model of memory-processes does not cover all processes of remembering or recollecting. In fact, it is only fully satisfactory as an account of how we remember past sense-perceptions, the first kind of remembering considered by Augustine in 8,12–15.

Describing the process of recalling past sense-perceptions is not, in itself, a problem for Augustine. Its most puzzling aspect is the original formation of the image which is subsequently remembered ("quae quomodo fabricatae sint, quis dicit ...?", 8,13), a problem, strictly speaking, of sense-perception itself. Some approaches to a solution of that problem had already been attempted by Augustine in earlier writings, *De animae quantitate*, *De musica*, and *De magistro*; others are proffered in the later books of *De trinitate* and *De Genesi ad litteram*[8]. In the *Confessions* account, Augustine stresses the vast variety and quantity of the images stored in the memory. But certain general observations about this type of memory are made. What one remembers when one recalls past sense-perceptions is always a mental image, and it is an image sufficiently like the thing remembered for precise distinctions (between the scent of

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[7] See e.g. A. Solignac, *Les Confessions I–VII* (*Œuvres de saint Augustin* 13), Paris 1962, pp. 19–26 (earlier studies listed here p. 20, note 1); G. N. Knauer, *Psalmenzitate in Augustins Konfessionen*, Göttingen 1955, pp. 133–161; Id., "Peregrinatio animae (Zur Frage der Einheit der augustinischen Konfessionen)", in *Hermes* 85 (1957) pp. 216–248; Hübner, "Die *praetoria memoriae*" pp. 261–263; Doucet, "L'*Ars Memoriae*".

[8] For Augustine's views on sense-perception see O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* pp. 80–105; on the formation of memory-images, ib. pp. 131–133.

lilies and the scent of violets, or the taste of honey and of wine, 8,13) to be made, and for the person remembering to reject other memories that come to mind as not what he is trying to remember (8,12). Moreover, such memory-processes do not merely involve recollection of individually perceived things, but can enable me to recall a series of linked perceptions in the right order: Augustine, ever sensitive to an example involving the use of words, refers to recitation of what one has learned by heart ("cum aliquid narro memoriter", 8,12).

It is significant that Augustine does not employ one well-worn metaphor for memory, that of the impression made upon a block of wax by a seal or some other object. It may be that he recoils from a metaphor that imports the concept of a material process too vividly into the very activity of perceiving, as well as creating problems even in a materialist account of how successive perceptions are stored, as Chrysippus' critique of Cleanthes demonstrates[9]. Instead, Augustine adopts a dynamic metaphor for the process of recalling. Images pour out in heaps, hurl themselves into my consciousness, and I must brush them aside until I find the one for which I am looking (8,12). If this is an extension of the beehive metaphor, with images buzzing against the conscious mind[10], then the image is an intriguing parallel to the comparison of memory with an aviary (περιστερεών) in Plato's *Theaetetus* 197dff., where the variety of things remembered, both individual and in combination, is compared with various birds in single flight or in flocks (197d). Recalling what one is trying to remember is like searching for and catching the right dove or pigeon (199b). The aviary image is a complement and sequel to the wax block metaphor (191cff.): for one thing, it is a more satisfactory way of suggesting how we store and recall memories that do not require mental images. To that extent it has a different function from Augustine's picture of the swarm of memory-images. Nor is it plausible to argue that Augustine is in any sense influenced by the *Theaetetus* passage. But both Plato and Augustine prefer the dynamic to the static metaphor when evoking the processes of mental retention and recalling. The metaphor of flight also attracts Augustine when he describes the mind's exploration of its own range of memories: "per haec omnia discurro et uolito hac illac" (17,26).

III

Augustine extends the mental-image theory tentatively to one other type of memory, that of past emotions ("affectiones", 14,21), such as sadness, cheerfulness, fear, and desire. He recognizes that these form a special category, inasmuch as remembering a past feeling need not entail re-experiencing that feeling. I may feel nothing at all, or I may, in recalling a past feeling, experience its contrary, as when I joyfully remember

[9] *SVF* II 56 (cf. note 4 above). See, however, *De trinitate* XI 2,3.

[10] Hübner, "Die *praetoria memoriae*" pp. 251f.

past sorrow (ib.)[11]. How is this different from recalling the scent of a lily, for example? Presumably Augustine means that in the latter case the memory-image conveys some distinctive quality of what is remembered, that it is a likeness of the thing remembered. But when one remembers a past emotion, its distinctive quality, the feeling one had, may be lacking. I recall that I felt afraid, when a child, of the dark, and I can do so without reliving that fear (it may, of course, be present again when I recall it). Evidently the two types of recalling cannot be accounted for in the same terms: to recall a scent is not the same as recalling fear. So why does Augustine not try to account for memories of past feelings without reference to the mental-image theory? He is tempted to when he asserts that it is because the ideas of past feelings which we remember are in the memory that we can remember them, and that these ideas ("notiones") cannot have been perceived by any of the senses: they are not related to anything outside ourselves, unlike images of the objects of sense-perception, but are, rather, derived from the mind's introspection of its own experiences (14,22). Augustine's language here seems to be leading him towards the conclusion that I do not have images of past feelings in the memory. Yet in the following paragraph he draws back from such a conclusion:

> nomino dolorem corporis, nec mihi adest, dum nihil dolet; nisi tamen adesset imago eius in memoria mea, nescirem, quid dicerem nec eum in disputando a uoluptate discernerem (15,23).

He does not say why he draws back in this way, preferring dramatic riposte to explicit argument; but we may infer the reason. Even if affections are mental phenomena, we can recall them only because we have experienced them. For Augustine they are, therefore, quite distinct from recalled ideal numbers, scientific principles, or Forms, which we recall although we have not acquired knowledge of them through any assimilated experience. Now recalling numbers, principles, and Forms is a privileged kind of memory, explained by Augustine without recourse to the image theory. Because memories of past feelings, though introspective, are based on past experiences, they cannot be equally privileged. Memory of past sorrow is not like memory of past physical pain (14,21), but neither is it memory of an idea. Against the trend of his argument Augustine concludes that he cannot put memories of past feelings on a par with the special category of remembering that does not require images.

In 15,23 Augustine puts forward a criterion for establishing that X is "in the memory". If I can name X and recognize what the name "x" refers to or means, I remember X. At the end of the paragraph Augustine gives the example of "memory". I remember or call to mind what memory is because I recognize the meaning of "memory". Augustine believes that this is likely to be an instance of memory deriving

[11] Cf. the related aesthetic paradox, that the pain recorded in literature gives pleasure: *Confessions* III 2,2–4. Some texts from Homer onwards are noted by C. Macleod (ed.), *Homer: Iliad, Book XXIV*, Cambridge 1982, p. 7 note 4.

from direct acquaintance rather than through recall of a mental image: "num et ipsa (sc. memoria) per imaginem suam sibi adest ac non per se ipsam?" (15,23). Now the case for asserting that remembering memory does not require an image is not stronger than the case for making a similar assertion about remembering past feelings. Here and in 13,20 Augustine's talk about remembering memory and remembering that I remembered things refers to my experience of remembering, irrespective of what I remember. But, just as he shies away from claiming that memory of past feelings indubitably does not require an image, so he avoids claiming that memory of memory indubitably does require such an image. His reason for the former course has been discussed above. His reason for the latter course may simply be based on common sense. It seems implausible to suggest that we need an image of memory in order to recollect what memory is, just as it would be implausible to suggest that we can only recall what mind and its activities are by means of an image of mind. In other words, there are instances of introspection which are not instances of the mind's self-reflexion[12], but which none the less seem to be recalled without a mental image. In 15,23 Augustine gives a related example. If I recall my mental image of the sun, I do so, not by means of an image of that image, but by recalling the image itself. I do not require image s_2 in order to recall image s_1 of object S. My introspection through memory of my store of mental images is direct. Augustine's grounds for this assertion are once again commonsensical, rather than a desire to avoid an infinite regress (though he does, in fact, avoid one).

IV

Augustine's extended discussion of forgetting in *Confessions* X (16,24–25; 18,27–19,28) has been found to be less satisfactory than other parts of his survey of memory and attendant phenomena. His argument calls for detailed attention. It begins with an application of the criterion of 15,23. If I can name forgetting ("obliuio") and recognize what 'forgetting' means, I remember forgetting. Augustine makes it clear at the outset that he is not talking merely about remembering the meaning of a word (for I can remember what "forgetting" means without forgetting anything), but also about recalling that to which the word refers, the phenomenon of forgetting – what we may call memory in a strong sense. How can I actualize forgetting in my mind without, in fact, forgetting? Put this way, the question is akin to that about past feelings. But Augustine registers a crucial difference. In the case of past feelings, my experience tells me that I can recall them without re-experiencing them. In the case of forgetting, it is the criterion of 15,23 that makes me conclude that forgetting is in the memory: the conclusion derives, not from experience, but from the application of a principle to an individual instance. If the conclusion is paradoxical or unacceptable, either the principle is untenable, or the conclusion itself is falsely drawn. Augustine clearly does

[12] See note 21 below.

not wish to abandon his criterion. His first reaction, therefore, is to interpret his conclusion in an acceptable way. He suggests that forgetting is not present in the memory in itself, because that would entail that I do not remember, but forget; but that it is present by means of a mental image (16,24). In other words, since I indubitably know what forgetting is, I call it to mind in the same way that I recall past feelings. I do not actually experience forgetting every time I recall it.

Augustine's proposal that the image theory may solve the dilemma about forgetting disposes of the twin absurdities that something I remember is not in my memory, and that the forgetfulness in my memory prevents me forgetting (16,25). But when he turns to reconsider his proposal, doubts creep in. The mental image presupposes an antecedent experience. This is unproblematic in the case of sense-perceptions. But the experience of forgetting entails the deletion of memory-content. How, therefore, can it simultaneously generate memory-content, viz. the mental image of forgetting (ib.)?

Augustine's solution to this apparent impasse is to start a new line of argument. Taking the Biblical example of the parable of the woman who loses a coin and searches for it (Luke 15 : 8), he establishes that when I lose a thing I have forgotten where it is but remember what it is I have lost. I can also remember that I have lost it. The image of the lost object is in the memory, and this image both prompts the search and enables me to recognize the object when I find it (18,27). Augustine now applies this model to the case of forgetting. His example of forgetting is of a special kind: I see or think about a person I know, but I have forgotten his name. Searching for the right name is like searching for the lost object, and can involve similar rejection of what one is not looking for (other names, other objects), even before one remembers (or has found) what has been forgotten (or lost). But such similarities do not obscure the real differences between the two processes. Loss of object X, for which I am searching, entails possession of its mental image x: what I have forgotten is where X now is. Forgetting the name Y, for which I am racking my brains, does not entail possession of its mental image y: I have simply forgotten Y. But I know that I once possessed that knowledge, just as I know that I once possessed the lost object. And in both cases I know what X and Y are *not*. Augustine encourages us to concentrate on the similarities, but at the same time he does not seek to prevent us from spotting the differences. So there is no talk of images when forgetting a person's name is discussed. Nor should there be. For it would not make sense to say that I have an image of the name but cannot recall the name itself. When I do recall the name I recognize it as something which I had once learned: I am not learning it for the second time ("non enim quasi nouum credimus, sed recordantes adprobamus hoc esse, quod dictum est", 19,28). Augustine concludes that this is only possible if I have not entirely forgotten the name. Had I entirely forgotten it, I should not be prompted to search for it, nor would I recognize it when reminded of it:

> si autem penitus aboleatur ex animo, nec admoniti reminiscimur, neque enim omni modo adhuc obliti sumus, quod uel oblitos nos esse meminimus. hoc ergo nec amissum quaerere poterimus, quod omnino obliti fuerimus (ib.).

Thus the function of the mental image of the lost object in both prompting my search for it and enabling me to recognize it when it is found corresponds to the function of not having entirely lost knowledge of the name which I have now forgotten.

Augustine leaves the reader to draw conclusions about the application of this argument to the case of remembering forgetting, in the strong sense of remembering. Remembering forgetting is related to an object: it is remembering that I have forgotten something. But to remember that I have forgotten something entails that I have not entirely forgotten it. In 19,28 Augustine rewrites the conclusions of 16,25. The experience of forgetting does not entail the absolute deletion of memory-content: it need only entail temporary loss of conscious awareness of memory-content. In such cases the memory of what I have forgotten remains latent in the mind. Nor does the experience of forgetting entail having a mental image of forgetting. Without such a mental image, I can recognize what the term "forgetting" means, and so remember forgetting (something). The example of forgetting somebody's name is intended to demonstrate that I can simultaneously forget something and have it in my memory, just as my search for the name shows that there are instances where I know that I have not entirely forgotten what I have forgotten.

How satisfactory is Augustine's account of forgetting? Solignac's observation that Augustine creates difficulties by materializing forgetting and considering it to be a thing is pertinent to the first part of the discussion (16,24–25), but fails to register the exploratory debate of the chapter, its attempt to dramatize the problem and its provision of a temporary solution that is patently unsatisfactory and presents new problems[13]. Solignac fails to observe that the second part of the discussion (18,27–19,28) complements the first and proposes a way out of the dilemma, once again using the technique of implicit riposte. He suggests that Augustine might have treated the phenomenon of forgetting as he does those of silence and darkness, which are defined in terms of the absence or contrast of noise or of light (*Confessions* XII 3,3). Forgetting, by this token, is simply not-remembering. Why does Augustine not adopt this approach? One reason may be that, unlike silence and darkness, forgetting is a psychological condition or experience. But Augustine could say that it is simply the condition or experience of not-remembering. A more serious reason why he might have found this approach unhelpful is given in the second part of the discussion, which shows that forgetting is not simply not-remembering, but can be a kind of partial remembering. Between forgetting and remembering there is a third condition, in which I can be said neither to remember something nor to have forgotten it totally. The noise-silence and light-darkness examples are not analogous to remembering-forgetting.

But Solignac is undoubtedly right to point out that a passage in a later book of *De trinitate* makes an important addition to the *Confessions* account of recalling what we

[13] Solignac, "La mémoire" pp. 563f.

have forgotten. I can recall the circumstances or context of what I have forgotten, and that can help me recollect it. In the *Confessions* account Augustine points out that we can be reminded by something else of what we have forgotten ("cum ab alio conmoniti recognoscimus", 19,28). But in *De trinitate* XI 7,12 Augustine adduces the example of trying to recall yesterday's dinner by recalling that I ate dinner yesterday, that there was a yesterday and it had a dinner time, that there is a meaning of the verb "to dine", and so on. Augustine here observes what Hume has described as "The chief exercise of memory ... not to preserve the simple ideas, but their order and position"[14]. Our memories are contextual, and this facilitates the recollection of what we have temporarily forgotten. Augustine's discussions of forgetting in *De trinitate* bring out more clearly the role of the will in recollection, and it is interesting to observe that he speaks of indicators ("signa") rather than images when accounting for the process of recalling a forgotten meeting with someone: these indicators are, again, contextual (where, when, and how we met, *trin.* XIV 13,17). This contextual dimension is lacking in the *Confessions* account, as is the elaborate analogy, found also in *De trinitate*, between retention and recollection on the one hand, and language (inner and expressed words) on the other (*trin.* VIII 6,9; XV 9,16; XV 10,19–12,22)[15]. But the *Confessions* account is an important step towards the more elaborate account of *De trinitate*, and without the former Augustine's closely argued dismissal of flawed accounts of forgetting could not be retraced.

V

Augustine evokes the phenomenon of memory when he accounts for serial operations such as continuous, temporally extended perception of an object, or the recitation or singing of a known poem or hymn (*De musica* VI 8,21; *De Genesi ad litteram* XII 11,22; XII 16,33). In any such operation the activation of memory is instantaneous and uninterrupted. Memory appears to underwrite the continuity of these mental processes, and thereby to provide the subject's sense of his own identity:

> ibi (sc. in memoria) mihi et ipse occurro meque recolo, quid, quando et ubi egerim quoque modo, cum agerem, affectus fuerim. ibi sunt omnia, quae siue experta a me siue credita memini (8,14).

Memory is the focal point of consciousness, in which past, present, and future are related:

> ex eadem copia etiam similitudines rerum uel expertarum uel ex eis, quas expertus sum, creditarum alias atque alias et ipse cont exo praeteritis atque ex his etiam futuras actiones et euenta et spes, et haec omnia rursus quasi praesentia meditor (ib.).

[14] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* I 1,3, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford 1896, p. 9.

[15] See O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* pp. 138–146.

The faculty of memory is the mind: linguistic usage confirms this. To 'remember' is "in animo habere", what is 'forgotten' is "non in animo" or "elapsum animo" (14,21): "animus ... etiam ipsa memoria" (ib.). Mind, memory, and the concept of 'I' are inextricably linked:

> magna uis est memoriae, nescio quid horrendum ... profunda et infinita multiplicitas; et hoc animus est, et hoc ego ipse sum (17,26).

Elsewhere in the *Confessions* Augustine appears to argue that my identity as a person is dependent upon continuity of consciousness:

> hanc ... aetatem ... qua me uixisse non memini ... piget me adnumerare huic uitae meae, quam uiuo in hoc saeculo ... et quid mihi iam cum eo est, cuius nulla uestigia recolo? (I 7,12)

Augustine is referring to infancy, which he cannot recall, any more than he can recall life in his mother's womb: these are forgotten phases of his existence to which he believes that he has no direct access (ib.). But Augustine is not claiming that, because he cannot remember these phases, they are not part of his life and do not constitute his identity. On the contrary, he can reconstruct a model of that identity by hearsay and observation of other infants, and speak of it as 'his' life (I 6,7–7,11). The concept of memory presupposes the concept of 'I'. And just as areas of my past are not accessible to my memory, yet none the less constitute my identity, so even now I cannot consciously grasp the totality of what I am: "nec ego ipse capio totum, quod sum" (X 8,15). Consciousness does not define my identity. Augustine's position is not that of Locke:

> For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that that makes everyone to be what he calls *self*, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things: in this alone consists *personal identity* ... And as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that *person* ...[16]

Augustine puzzles elsewhere over the implications for our identity of forgetting or acquiring memory powers, and concludes that it is not the case that our identity is affected by such matters, but rather that our knowledge of ourselves is imperfect (*De anima et eius origine* IV 7,9–10). When he says in the passage from the first book of the *Confessions* quoted above "hanc ... aetatem ... piget me adnumerare huic uitae meae", he cannot be claiming that the phase of forgotten infancy is not his life. But he is claiming that, because it is irretrievably forgotten, it cannot constitute his sense of his identity, that he cannot reckon ("adnumerare") it as part of his consciousness, to be scrutinized in the analysis of his remembered past:

> recordari uolo transactas foeditates meas et carnales corruptiones animae meae ... recolens uias meas nequissimas in amaritudine recogitationis meae ... (*conf.* II 1,1).

[16] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* II 27,9, ed. J. W. Yolton, London 1961, I, p. 281.

If Augustine does not equate continuity of consciousness with personal identity, neither does he define memory as the mind without qualification. Memory is the mind engaged in certain activities, just as understanding and will are the mind engaged in equally distinctive activities (*trin.* X 11,18). Augustine observes that it is difficult to distinguish between "intellegentia sui" and "memoria sui" (*trin.* X 12,19): the processes of thinking, recalling, and being self-conscious are intimately related. There would be little point to the analogy between the Trinity and the ternary structure of the mind as "intellegentia", "memoria", and "uoluntas" in *trin.* X ff. if mind were not a single power whose activities and processes are none the less distinct[17].

VI

The preceding account of aspects of Augustine's views on remembering and forgetting in *Confessions* X has concentrated on those sections where the *Confessions* is our principal or only discussion of his arguments. It is beyond the scope of this paper adequately to deal with what is said in *Confessions* X about our memory of scientific principles, or of happiness, or of God. I shall comment only on one puzzling distinction which Augustine draws between our memory of the first two, and our memory of God[18]. In the case of both scientific principles and happiness Augustine argues that they are latent in the memory and elicited from it by mental concentration, and that they are known (or recalled) by direct acquaintance, without either antecedent sense-perception or the requirement of a mental image:

> quocirca inuenimus nihil esse aliud discere ista, quorum non per sensus haurimus imagines, sed sine imaginibus, sicuti sunt, per se ipsa intus cernimus, nisi ea, quae passim atque indisposite memoria continebat, cogitando quasi colligere atque animaduertendo curare, ut tamquam ad manum posita in ipsa memoria, ubi sparsa prius et neglecta latitabant, iam familiari intentioni facile occurrant (11,18).
> amant enim et ipsam (sc. ueritatem) ... et cum amant beatam uitam, quod non est aliud quam de ueritate gaudium, utique amant etiam ueritatem nec amarent, nisi esset aliqua notitia eius in memoria eorum (23,33).

At one point in his elaboration of this theory Augustine objects to the view that principles of dialectic might be in the memory before I learned them:

> ibi (sc. in meo corde) ergo erant et antequam ea didicissem, sed in memoria non erant (10,17).

They are in the mind, but not in the memory. But he immediately counters this objection by appealing to my sense of recognition of the truth of such principles when

[17] On this ternary structure see esp. M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des heiligen Augustinus*, Münster 1927 (reprinted Münster 1967), pp. 264–331.

[18] This concept is studied by L. Cilleruelo in a series of articles: "La 'memoria Dei' según san Agustín", in *Augustinus Magister* I, Paris 1954, pp. 499–509; "Porqué 'memoria Dei'?", in *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 10 (1964) pp. 289–294; "Pro 'memoria Dei'", ib. 12 (1966) pp. 65–84. Cf. G. Madec, "Pour et contre la 'memoria Dei'", in ib. 11 (1965) pp. 89–92.

elicited by thought: they must be in the remote recesses ("in cauis abditioribus") of memory. The passage is a striking example of Augustine 's use of self-interrogation and dialogue elements. The sentence quoted is an objection, in the form of an intervention, which is then answered by the counter-argument.

Now when he is discussing memory of God Augustine twice asserts that God cannot be in the memory before I learn of him:

> ... dignatus es habitare in memoria mea, ex quo te didici (25,36).
> neque enim iam eras in memoria mea, priusquam te discerem (36,37).

Why the distinction? In several writings from every phase of his career Augustine stresses that God is both knowable and unknowable[19]. God is knowable because he is the truth and the Good, and vision of God is the goal of human striving after happiness. The divine illumination in whose light truth is perceived may cause apprehension of God as well as of the scientific truth and Forms (*De Gen. ad litt.* XII 31,59). But knowing God is not the same as knowing the Forms: it is at once easier for a pious person to "sense (sentire)" or "touch (attingere)" God than to understand the Forms and scientific principles (*De Gen. ad litt.* V 16,34), and more difficult to form any adequate understanding of God. God is often known externally, through his creative activity, for example. Complete understanding of God is impossible. Augustine can take refuge in talk of the "docta ignorantia" (*epist.* CXXX 15,28) whereby I can know God, or suggest that he is known by "not knowing" (*De ordine* II 16,44; II 18,47). But Forms and principles are accessible to our minds, and can be understood fully, if only through divine illumination. It may be that the overriding theme of *Confessions* X leads Augustine to emphasize that happiness, etc. are in the memory rather than the mind, whereas elsewhere he is content to assert that there is latent knowledge in the mind that thought can elicit (e.g. *De immortalitate animae* 4,6). But Augustine talks of knowledge as recollection far more frequently than he does of memory of God. And the distinction under discussion has the merit of stressing the difference between knowing God and knowing happiness, principles, etc. God is within, found through introspection: but God is discovered, not merely through intellectual application, but by submission of the will:

> ... non liquide omnes audiunt. omnes unde uolunt consulunt, sed non semper quod uolunt audiunt. optimus minister tuus est, qui non magis intuetur hoc a te audire quod ipse uoluerit, sed potius hoc uelle quod a te audierit (26,37).

Love of God[20] is not, however, knowledge of God. The quest for that knowledge begins with an attempt to understand the implications of God's creative activity (6,8–7,11). The discovery of degrees of being, which coincides with the discovery of the nature of memory, leads to an understanding of God which is not said to be complete, but which is a kind of learning ("discere", 24,35). Thus we learn about the

[19] See e.g. *Soliloquia* I 8,15; *De Genesi ad litteram* V 16,34; *Sermo* CXVII 3,5; *De trinitate* VIII 2,3–3,5.
[20] See J. Burnaby, *Amor Dei – A Study of the Religion of St. Augustine*, London 1938, esp. pp. 141–179.

God who is within us and he comes into our memory (25,36–26,37). This progress informs and deepens the love of God which was the starting-point of the investigation:

> non dubia, sed certa conscientia, domine, amo te (6,8).
> sero te amaui, pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam noua, sero te amaui (27,38).

VII

Augustine's use of *memoria* and terms for remembering covers a wide range of activities, not all of them self-evidently kinds of memory. Such activities are: self-consciousness, self-knowledge, understanding a scientific principle or law. In this last case the historical influence of the Platonic doctrine and language of recollection (*anamnesis*) accounts for Augustine's usage, providing him with a means of explaining his belief that such understanding is not derived from experience or learned in the everyday way. In certain accounts of self-knowledge which relate it to self-reflexion (in the Neoplatonic sense of rediscovering one's true self)[21] the language of memory has a similar plausibility. But there are uses of memory-language in Augustine which appear questionable or untenable. One such case is his claim that memory is essential to the performance of serial operations such as perception, time-awareness, or speaking a sentence. Ryle's arguments against describing the agent's being "throughout the process of the operation *au fait* both with what he has completed and with what remains to do" in terms of actual reminiscence hold good against Augustine's claim that a memory performance takes place in such cases[22]. Not-forgetting or not-to-have-forgotten, or bearing in mind, are not instances of recalling or remembering, and there is no intelligible use of the word 'remember' to describe the mental concentration involved. And such concentration does not entail self-consciousness in the sense implied by Augustine.

VIII

Augustine's investigation of the problems of remembering and forgetting in *Confessions* X is situated in two contexts – one textual, the other historical – which will be examined briefly in the concluding part of this paper[23]. The textual context is marked by transition, from the narrative Books I–IX (which follow the chronological progress

[21] On self-reflexion in Plotinus see G. O'Daly, *Plotinus' Philosophy of the Self*, Shannon/New York 1973, pp. 70–81; T. A. Szlezák, *Platon und Aristoteles in der Nuslehre Plotins*, Basel/Stuttgart 1979, pp. 126–135. A key Augustinian text is *De trinitate* X 3,5–10,16.
[22] G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, London 1949, Ch. 6, Sect. 4 (= Harmondsworth 1963, pp. 160–173, esp. pp. 170f.).
[23] In the following I react gratefully to Reinhart Herzog's comments, though he should not be held responsible for what I have made of them.

of Augustine's life up to the death of his mother Monica in 387) to his investigation of his present spiritual and moral state at the time of writing (possibly about 400)[24]. Augustine repeatedly expresses the contrast of Books I–IX and Book X by describing the latter as an account, not of what he has been, but of what he is:

> ... non qualis fuerim, sed qualis sim ... non quis fuerim, sed quis iam sim et quis adhuc sim (X 4,6; cf. 3,4).

The obvious reference here is to the systematic scrutiny of his progress and (in greater detail) his failings that follows the examination of memory, beginning at X 28,39 and occupying the rest of the book. Thus the question "who am I?" in X 3,4 and 4,6 is not primarily a question about human identity (such as was discussed in section V above), but one about the present moral condition of the writer as subject. It is, therefore, tempting to see the examination of memory as an excursus, although it is arguable that such an examination is, rather, construed by Augustine as a prelude: before the investigation of the moral self comes that of the investigating agent, the human mind whose love of God has to be re-coded as knowledge of God, the knowledge that is, in turn, the prerequisite of memory of God as a pre-eminent instance of the complex power of memory. In a further sense, the examination of memory is a prelude: Augustine's account of time-consciousness as a process of mental duration in *Confessions* XI can only be understood as an activity in which the role of memory is essential (see especially XI 18,23–28,38)[25].

Augustine's account of memory can also be seen as part of the ancient philosophical tradition of discussion of the phenomenon. But it is not possible to identify a specific influence to which Augustine is indebted. He neither agrees with Aristotle that all memory processes depend upon the mental image[26], nor with Plotinus that such an image theory is unnecessary, but that memory is rather a case of "the mind awakening its powers in such a way as to possess something not present to it" (*Enneads* III 6,2,43 f.)[27]. He cannot accept as an account of all kinds of memory the Stoic assumption that the tabula rasa of the mind is gradually filled by the stored memory-impressions which derive from experience, though he implicitly concurs with that

[24] The transition is perceptively discussed by R. Herzog, "*Non in sua voce*: Augustins Gespräch mit Gott in den *Confessiones* – Voraussetzungen und Folgen", in *Das Gespräch*, ed. K. Stierle/R. Warning (= *Poetik und Hermeneutik* XI), München 1984, pp. 213–250 (here pp. 237–242).

[25] I am thankful to Amos Funkenstein for insisting on the importance of this point: for my discussion of Augustine's views on time see O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* pp. 152–161.

[26] See especially *De memoria et reminiscentia* (in Aristotle, *Parva Naturalia*, ed. W. D. Ross, Oxford 1955), with Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory* pp. 1–21 and notes pp. 63–87.

[27] The translation is S. MacKenna's (*Plotinus: The Enneads*, revised by B. S. Page, London ³1962, p. 203). For a survey of Plotinus' views on memory, with copious references, see W. Theiler, "Überblick über Plotins Philosophie und Lehrweise", in *Plotins Schriften* VI, Hamburg 1971, pp. 103–172 (here pp. 135f.). I have discussed some aspects of Plotinus' views in relation to Augustine, *ep.* VII and *De ordine* II 2,6–7 in: "Memory in Plotinus and two early texts of St. Augustine", in *Studia Patristica* XIV (= *Texte und Untersuchungen* 117), Berlin 1976, pp. 461–469.

assumption as an explanation of memories of sense-perceptions[28]. Augustine's insistence that in some kinds of memory the mental image is a prerequisite, whereas in others it is not, is closest to Plato's position, if one may extrapolate from the dialogues, with their differing concerns about empirical memory and the anamnesis of the Forms, a coherent Platonic account of memory[29]. But the limitations of Augustine's lack of advanced knowledge of Greek, alluded to in the brief discussion of the aviary metaphor in the *Theaetetus* in section II above, made his extended direct use of the Platonic corpus impossible[30]. Intermediaries such as Cicero provided him with access to some central Platonic doctrines: a pertinent example, relevant to the topic of memory, is the reference to the *Meno* in *De trinitate* XII 15,24, which derives from Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* I 24,57. Cicero's enthusiastic evocation of the power of memory as a prime instance of the power of the immaterial mind in that section of the *Tusculans* (extending to I 28,70) has undoubtedly left traces in Augustine's *Confessions* account[31]. Like Augustine, Cicero stresses the impressive and puzzling range of empirical memory, and like him he considers the special case of those engaged in the study of the artes (*Tusc. disp.* I 24,59). Cicero also explores the notion of the capaciousness ("capacitas", cf. *conf.* X 9,16) of memory, while denying that such a power ("uis", cf. *conf.* X 8,15) can inhabit any physical space (ib. I 25,60f.). Finally, Cicero's account relates the phenomenon of memory, both to our awareness of the parameters of the mind's self-knowledge, and to our knowledge of God through his works and by analogy with the human mind (ib. I 27,66f.; 28,70–29,71). There are thematic and stylistic elements[32] in this Ciceronian discussion that Augustine is likely to have adapted, but the range of Augustine's concerns overlaps only partly with Cicero's, and his scrutiny of the problems of memory is more acute and wide-ranging. It is possible that the topics treated by Augustine were listed in the doxographical handbooks[33] to which

[28] See *SVF* II 83 = Aetius IV 11,1–4. The Stoic view that there is no remembering without assent (*SVF* II 115 = Cicero, *Academica priora* II 12,38) is adopted by Augustine, e.g. *trin.* XI 8,15: see O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* pp. 132f.

[29] There is a brief but valuable survey of the principal Platonic references in Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory* p. 5 notes 1–2. Several critical approaches to the interpretation of the Platonic dialogues are discussed and exemplified in C. L. Griswold, Jr. (ed.), *Platonic Writings, Platonic Readings*, New York/London 1988.

[30] On Augustine's knowledge of Greek see B. Altaner, *Kleine Patristische Schriften*, ed. G. Glockmann (= *Texte und Untersuchungen* 83), Berlin 1967, pp. 129–163; P. Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, Paris ²1948, pp. 183–194 (for Augustine's access to Plato and the Neoplatonists through Latin translations and quotations see ib. pp. 119–129, 156–176, 226–229).

[31] One of a number of verbal parallels: "habet primum memoriam et eam infinitam rerum innumerabilium", *Tusc. disp.* I 24,57; "... profunda et infinita multiplicitas ... in memoriae ... cauernis innumerabilibus atque innumerabiliter plenis innumerabilium rerum generibus", *conf.* X 17,26).

[32] Cf. the rhetorical texture of *Tusc. disp.* I 27,67 (anticipating features of Augustine's 'questioning' style): "ubi igitur aut qualis est ista mens? – ubi tua aut qualis? potesne dicere? an, si omnia ad intellegendum non habeo quae habere vellem, ne is quidem quae habeo mihi per se uti licebit?"

[33] See A. Solignac, "Doxographies et manuels dans la formation philosophique de s. Augustin", in *Recherches Augustiniennes* 1 (1958) pp. 113–148.

he had frequent recourse, though no such scheme of memory topoi is readily identifiable: at all events, even if the themes are traditional, Augustine's analysis creates the impression of sustained original reflection.

Augustine's Critique of Varro on Roman Religion

In this paper I shall be dealing with Augustine's polemic against two works of Varro's in the early books of the *City of God*[1]. The Varronian works are the *Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum* and, to a lesser extent, the *Logistoricus* entitled *Curio De Cultu Deorum.* Elsewhere in the *City of God* Augustine uses other works by Varro. His historical work *De Gente Populi Romani* is the source for Augustine's account of Greek history and the earliest phases of Roman history in Book 18. The work will have interested Augustine, as it propounds a Euhemeristic theory of the deification of kings and other humans, but I shall not be discussing it here. Nor shall I be saying anything about Augustine's use and critique of Varro's *De Philosophia* in Book 19 of the *City of God,* where teleology, rather than theology, is the matter under discussion.

In assessing Augustine's polemic against Varro it is important to be aware of the context in which it is situated. Augustine says that he was motivated to write the *City of God* by the sack of Rome by Alaric and his Gothic army in August 410 and subsequent pagan attempts to blame Christianity for the event (*Retractationes* 2.43). Alaric had been a menacing presence in Italy since 401, and Romans had long been nervous about the Goths. There is inscriptional evidence from 402 for the restoration of the Aurelian walls in anticipation of a siege[2]. When Claudian celebrates the Roman victory over Alaric at Pollentia in 402, his panegyric presents that victory as saving Rome from attack (*Bellum*

[1] For Varro in Augustine's works see H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics* (Göteborg, 1967) 1.265-316 (fragments collected by B. Cardauns), 2.589-630. Editions of fragments: B. Cardauns, *Varros Logistoricus über die Götterverehrung* (*Curio de cultu deorum*), Diss. Köln (Würzburg, 1960); Id., *M. Terentius Varro. Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum,* 2 vols. (Wiesbaden, 1976).

[2] *CIL* 6.1188-1190: cf. O. Zwierlein, «Der Fall Roms im Spiegel der Kirchenväter», *ZPE* 32 (1978) 45-80 (here 45).

Geticum 50-62, 77-103, 546-9). Claudian had to flatter the emperor Honorius and his general and minister Stilico, not to mention the Roman senate, and he may have distorted Alaric's aims in the process. But if Alaric did not have designs on the city of Rome in 401-2, he was to fulfil Claudian's claim by laying siege to the city in 408 and 409 in pursuit of his claims for massive payments, first for withdrawing from Italy to Pannonia, then for military operations on behalf of the imperial government in Epirus, and finally for releasing the corn supply, which he had seized, to the city[3]. Alaric was showing Honorius' court at Ravenna, as well as the Romans, how vulnerable they were to a ruler who was also a federate. What attracted him to Rome was its wealth and its status as the visible symbol of the empire's historical identity. The Goths departed with rich plunder and with prisoners after three days of pillage and slaughter. Great buildings — above all the palace of the Sallustii — were destroyed, but not the basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul, where many, Christians and others, had sought sanctuary: for Alaric and his Goths were Christians, of the Arian variety.

There is evidence that Alaric's presence in Italy had led to demands for the renewal of the pagan cult that had been suppressed, or at least threatened with suppression, since Theodosius' edicts of the 390s. At Rome the prohibition of pagan cult was apparently relaxed in an atmosphere of deep uncertainty[4]. The shock of the sack of Rome was as much psychological as it was material, and it affected Christians and others alike. Jerome could compare Rome's fall with the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and the Greek sack of Troy (*Letter* 123.15 f., 127.12; *Commentary on Ezekiel* 1 *praef.*)[5]. He and others had absorbed the ideology of *Roma aeterna* to the extent that a threat to the *imperium Romanum* appeared to undermine the political and social basis upon which the Christian Church was presumed to be founded.

[3] See Averil Cameron, *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity AD 395-600* (London and New York, 1993) 47 f.; J.F. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364-425* (Oxford, 1975) 284-306; Zwierlein (n. 2) 45-6.

[4] Sozomen 9.6.3; Zosimus 5.41.1f.; Matthews (n. 3) 290.

[5] Cf. Zwierlein (n. 2) 49-55.

These events caused much ideological uncertainty in Rome and elsewhere. Confusion was caused by the latent or overt paganism of many Romans, not least among the governing class, and also by the adoption of ideas of divine protection taken over by Christians from their pagan forerunners. Had Peter, Paul, and the other martyrs failed to protect their city where Rome's pagan gods had, in the past, succeeded? Yet the pagan Ostrogoth Radagaisus was turned away from Christian Rome in 406, and Alaric was a Christian, if a heretic: it was all very bewildering. Augustine's sermons of 410 and 411 show that these concerns were also those of his community at Hippo, a community that may have been swollen by refugees from Rome[6]. In these sermons Augustine develops themes that are to become those of the *City of God*. He streses the impermanence of all human institutions, whether Christian or not: Rome's vulnerability is not lessened by the presence there of martyrs' shrines. As a foil or contrast to the *Roma aeterna* concept he develops the notion of a heavenly home or city where, and only where, eternal peace and stability will be achieved. Pagan religion does not save cities any more than Christianity causes their ruin. In attacking pagan and Christian versions of the Rome myth, Augustine strives to disassociate Rome's historical destiny from that of Christianity, or any religion. He secularizes Roman history and institutions, reacting to some extent against his own tendency to Christian triumphalism in the Theodosian 390s.[7]

Augustine is not attacking phantoms when he takes on pagan critics of Christianity in the aftermath of 410. Paganism had by no means died even in heavily Christianized Roman North Africa[8]. After the overturning of the statue of Hercules at Sufetula, possibly in 399, a pagan mob killed sixty Christians and the local senate insisted that the Church make good the damage (Augustine, *Letter* 50). At Calama in 408 pagans held an

[6] Augustine, *Sermons* 81, 105, and 296; *De Excidio Vrbis Romae*.

[7] See R.A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine*, revised edn. (Cambridge, 1988), especially 22-71.

[8] For the following see T.D. Barnes, «Aspects of the background of the *City of God*', *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 52 (1982) 64-80 (here 71-2), reprinted in Barnes, *From Eusebius to Augustine* (London, 1994), no. XXIV.

illegal religious procession which led to a riot and looting of Christian property (Augustine, *Letter* 91.8-10). Church councils at Carthage in 407 and 408 sent protests to the imperial court at Ravenna concerning, among other things, the murder of bishops by pagans. We may suspect that these incidents were not isolated. But Augustine had more specific adversaries, Roman aristocrats driven out of Italy by Alaric's march on the Strait of Messina after his sack of Rome. Augustine presents these sophisticated critics of Christianity as subverting impressionable Christian minds, primarily at Carthage, by blaming recent disasters on the Christian religion (*City of God* 2.3, 2.29, 3.17). This sounds like a carefully defined group. But consideration both of the polemical tone of the *City of God* and of Augustine's correspondence of 411-12 suggests that the intended readership of the *City of God* may be more accurately determined. In these years Augustine exchanged letters with Flavius Marcellinus, who had been appointed imperial commissioner to supervise and preside over the Donatist *Collatio* of 411 at Carthage and to whom Augustine was later to dedicate Books 1-3 of the *City of God.* He also corresponded with Rufius Antonius Agrypinus Volusianus, sometime proconsul of Africa and future prefect of the city of Rome and of Italy[9]. Marcellinus was a devout and theologically interested Christian of senatorial background. Volusianus was loyal to the ancestral paganism of his family, the Caieonii, although several members of that family were pious and active Christians. But Volusianus was also curious about Christian doctrines such as the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth. Marcellinus reports to Augustine difficulties vlich Volusianus has in reconciling Roman political and religious practices with Christian injunctions to turn the other check and not to return evil for evil. In his replies Augustine argues that forgiveness of wrongs — the cultivation of the virtues of *benevolentia* and *patientia* — is something that the Romans themselves traditionally appreciated as crucial to the interests of the state, which depends upon *fides* and *concordia.* Moreover, Christian precepts

[9] Augustine, *Letters* 132, 135-9: the sequence contains letters to and from both Volusianus and Marcellinus.

are not incompatible with punitive measures, or even with warfare undertaken for the good of offenders and the general welfare.

This correspondence shows that Augustine had an audience interested in the religious and political issues to be explored in the *City of God.* And it shows what kind of audience that was. There were potential readers like Volusianus, cultivated aristocrats from largely Christianized families, men on the fringe of the Christian Church whose interest in a work of this kind would be considerable. Writing to Firmus after the work's completion, Augustine stresses its role in persuading potential converts and strengthening the perseverance of those alredy converted (*Letters* 1A*, 2*)[10]. Rather than seeing the work as a refutation of pagan objections to Christianity, to be read directly by the hostile pagans to whom Augustine refers, it is perhaps more appropriate to think of the readers of the *City of God* as Christians or those closely connected with Christianity who require fluent and convincing rebuttal of pagan views, both for their own satisfaction and as weapons in arguments with the defenders of paganism: Firmus the catechumen, Volusianus the curious pagan. We must distinguish between the targets of the work and its readership. The influence of traditional values, ideas, and beliefs even upon those who called themselves Christians was pervasive and considerable.

It is against this background that one can begin to appreciate why Varro's learned antiquarian writings on Roman religion are of such concern to Augustine. Varro was appealed to by educated pagan contemporaries as a religious authority (*City of God* 7.22). Augustine knows that he is dealing with readers possessing *ingenia celeriora atque meliora,* «quicker and better minds» (7 *praef.*). What Varro provided was an apologia for Roman traditional religion in a political and systematic philosophical context for readers who, in a time of crisis and an atmosphere of uncertainty, «had once again become extremely conscious of the historical roots of their culture»[11]. Such historical and cultural

[10] These letters are edited by J. Divjak in the CSEL edn. (vol. 88, 1981) of recently discovered letters of Augustine.

[11] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1979) 307.

consciousness is evident in a work like Macrobius' *Saturnalia*, written about 431, a year or so after Augustine's death and about five years after the completion of the *City of God*[12].

Augustine's polemic against Varro stands in a tradition whose Latin antecedents include Tertullian and Minucius Felix, Arnobius, and Lactantius. While Augustine adopts some of the arguments of this earlier Christian apologetic (such as the appropriateness of monotheism in an ordered universe and the identification of pagan deities with demons), in his use of Varro he departs from his predecessors, and the nature of his polemic takes on a different colouring.

Augustine acknowledges the systematic nature of Varro's account of Roman religion:

> 'Who has investigated these questions more carefully than Marcus Varro? Who has been more scholarly in his research? Who has given closer attention to the subject? Who has made sharper distinctions? Who has written a more careful and complete survey of the matter?' (6.2)[13].

These words of praise echo Cicero's in the *Academica* (known only from its citation in *City of God* 6.2)[14]. It is not surprising that Augustine goes on to summarize the structure of Varro's *Antiquitates* in 6.3. Augustine reacts systematically to Varro, and this reaction contrasts with, for example, Tertullian's piecemeal polemic against details of Varro's work in the *Ad Nationes*[15]. Thus, even where he is engaging in ridicule of the plurality of minor *di certi* in Book 4 (8-24) of the *City of God*, Augustine's argument is underpinned by the objection that there appears to be a conflict of functions between the special gods and major deities like Jupiter, Juno, or Neptune (4.10). Varro's claim that knowledge of the

[12] Cf. Alan Cameron, «The date and identity of Macrobius», *JRS* 56 (1966) 25-38.

[13] Cf. *City of God* 4.22, 6.5, 6.9. Here and subsequently in this paper references to the *City of God* omit the work's title and cite by book and chapter alone. The translations given follow for the most part those of the Loeb edn.

[14] In 6.2. Augustine also quotes from *Academica Posteriora* 1.3.9.

[15] Cf. J.H. Waszink, «Varrone nella letteratura cristiana dei primi secoli», *Atti del Congresso internazionale di studi Varroniani* (Rieti, 1976), 209-223=Waszink, *Opuscula Selecta* (Leiden, 1979), 386-400.

particular functions of each god in particular circumstances is essential to successful religious practice (just as one cannot live properly if one does not know the functions of doctors, bakers, plasterers, or blacksmiths, 4.22) is tested by Augustine's counter-claim that polytheism simply confuses divine functions. Does one pray to Jupiter or Victoria for success in war? And is not Victoria sent by Jupiter in any case (4.17)? And if Virtus and Fides are goddesses, why are Temerantia and Fortitudo not recognized as goddesses also (4.20)? And so on. Augustine finds it inconsistent to claim (a) that some functions are shared by some deities, and (b) that some moral qualities are deified and their religious functions defined, whereas other moral qualities whose functions are no less suitable are not.

Augustine is misusing Varro's method. Varro was indeed being systematic, but he was writing an antiquarian's account of Roman religious traditions. The divine functions which he described were consecrated by usage, or represented obsolete practices that gave information about Rome's religious past. He saw religion as a function of the state, a civic creation (4.31,6.4). He 'follows the institutions that the Roman state set up' (4.31). But Augustine feels that he can justifiably criticize Varro because, by his own admission, Varro's attitude to Roman religion is critical and reserved, and the criticism is based on a philosophical point of view. Varro adopts and applies the systematica distinction of three types of *theologia* or discourse about gods (*fabulosa, naturalis, civilis*)[16]. He propounds a *theologia naturalis* with strong Stoic colouring, despite an underlying scepticism about all assertions concerning gods ('for in these metters a human being has opinion, god has knowledge», 7.17). Because Varro claims that 'if he were founding that city [Rome] anew, he would consecrate the gods and give them names according to the principles of nature (*ex naturae potius formula*), rather than as they are now' (4.31), Augustine believes that he can question the honesty of Varro's historical method. Varro's careful delimitation of his subject-matter, his explanation that he is not writing about the whole of

[16] For the background see G. Lieberg, «Die «theologia tripertita» in Forschung und Bezeugung», *ANRW* 1.4 (1973) 63-115.

the nature of the gods (6.4), and that his account is historical: these considerations do not weigh with Augustine. He thinks that he has discovered the chink in Varro's armour, and that the mere admission that there *could* be another form of discourse — a philosophical examination that seeks to establish truth or at least probability — disqualifies the *Antiquitates* as *opiniones rerum vanarum*, 'speculations about unrealities' (6.4). It is importan to note the *ad hominem* nature of Augustine's argument. Here in 6.4 he is reproving Varro for not following the *naturae formula*, an investigation of a philosophical kind that might lead to truth. But when Varro does propound a natural theology, Augustine, as we shall see, criticizes that no less.

Once again, Augustine's criticism is that Varro's system is not systematic enough. Varro's opinion is that god is the soul of the universe, or rather that the body of the universe and its soul together are God, but that it is its soul or mind that makes it divine (7.6). This, Augustine points out, seems to make Varro a monotheist, but Varro then goes on to introduce a plurality of elemental gods of the aether and air, hyperlunary and sublunary deities. Despite his monotheistic claim, he constructs a polytheism. Augustine finds this multiplication of gods uneconomical, given Varro's criterion of distinct gods with distinct functions; but hee also criticizes Varro's naturalistic theology, which makes God the universe or its soul. Augustine's critique takes a number of forms. One kind is an application of the polemic of Book 4. Some of the *di selecti*, the twenty principal gods enumerated by Varro, have no evident natural functions: this is so with Mercury and Mars (7.14), unlike Liber and Ceres, whose functions are clear. And if planets like Mars, Saturn, and Venus are deified and if some of them have rites and temples, why are there no cults or shrines for the signs of the Zodiac (7.15)? Another contradiction that Augustine purports to find in Varro is that singular divine functions are inappropriately divided between deities: Janus and Terminus (7.7), Janus and Jupiter (7.9 f.), Jupiter and other gods (7.11-13), Juno, Ceres, and the Great Mother (7.16). But the chief criticism that Augustine makes of naturalistic explanations of religious practice is that they confuse the creator god and his attributes with the created universe and its ordered phenomena (7.27-31). In Book 7

Augustine appears simply to asssert the superiority of the idea of a transcendent God to any form of pantheism, and the concept of God that he opposes to Varro's is essentially Christian (7.30-32). But it is a concept based on Middle Platonist principles, as Book 8 goes on to demonstrate. Essentially, then, Augustine is here appealing to the assumed preferability of the monotheistic elements in Platonism to Stoicizing polytheism. Book 8.6-10 will show that this assumed preferability is dependent upon the Platonist concept of immaterial, eternal, unchanging, timeless being.

When Augustine turns to the other two kinds of discourse about gods, the mythical or poetic, and the civic or state-religious, his strategy is a reductionist one: he wants to equate them, or at least to show that they are inextricably linked. He builds on Varro's own admission of the links between mythical and civic theology in order to undermine the distinction between the two. The thrust of Augustine's argument is that myth and state religion are interactive, that divine imagery is influenced by myth and poetry and affects our perceptions of the gods, and that the *ludi scaenici* in particular are part of, and shape the tone of, state religion (4.26, 6.5-7)[17]. Myth-making and festivals are linked: Augustine adduces Varro's account of the foundation-myth of the festival of the Larentalia as an example of the way in which a fiction and a rite feed on each other (6.7). This may be a serious argument. But much of Augustine's polemic in this context is tendentious and based upon evidence and insinuations which he assumes to be damaging. In particular, he concentrates on rites where obscene and perverted elements can be isolated: Attis and Cybele, Bacchic rites, elements of the Roman marriage ceremony (6.8f.). Or he adduces obscene, frivolous, and degrading episodes involving gods in myths and theatrical productions (6.5-7). Seneca is played off against Varro: Seneca was more fortright in his *De Superstitione* in criticizing the irrationality and obsecenities of civic religion (6.10). Similar use of a pagan critic of paganism is made in Book 2, when Plato's strictures against poets in the *Republic* are mobilized as part of Augustine's critique

[17] See the remarks of P.A. Brunt, «Philosophy and Religion in the Late Republic», in M. Griffin and J. Barnes, ed. *Philosophia Togata*, (Oxford, 1989) 175-7.

of immoral gods in myth and cult. Mime and other theatre are a stick with which Augustine repeatedly beats the polytheists.

There is often little to choose between the polemic of Books 1-5 of the *City of God*, where claims about the benefits of pagan religion in this life are contested, and that of Books 6-10, where their efficacy in relation to the afterlife is debated. In Book 6, even if Cybele, Hermes Trismegistus, Isis and Osiris, and the mysteries are all mentioned, Augustine does not enter into any discussion of the claims about the afterlife made by these rites. His general polemic is intended to make specific arguments superfluous. This gives the polemic against Varro a certain independence within the work, just as the work as a whole, after Book 1, moves away from the immediate implications of the sack of Rome: we must bear in mind that Books 1-10 were not completed much before 417, although individual parts of the work circulated before then.

Varro praises the alleged aniconic phase in early Roman religion, and regrets its passing, as it led to a purer (*castius*) religious observation: he points to Judaism to support his view (4.31)[18]. Images of gods diminish reverence and induce erroneous beliefs (4.9, 4.31). But Varro is not unsympathetic to the use of *simulacra* and *insignia* of the gods, for he argues that it was a way of making mysteries accessible by visible means (7.5). Moreover, anthropomorphic images of gods point to the similarity between the human mind and divine reason. Augustine seizes on the inconsistency. Yet he himself elsewhere repeatedly asserts the value and legitimacy of attepting to understand the invisible by means of the created and the visible[19]. However, he is determined to give Varro no quarter

[18] Cf. Tacitus, *Histories* 5.5.4; see W. Theiler (ed.), *Poseidonios. Die Fragmente* (Berlin and New York, 1982) 2.283.

[19] See especially *Confessions* 7.17.23, 7.20.26, here and elsewhere citing Romans 1:20 in support. On the role of the *disciplinae liberales* in this context see Augustine, *Retractationes* 1.6: the poem by Augustine's pupil Licentius speaks of the *disciplinae* constitung an ascending path ('arcanum *Varronis* iter scrutando profundi/mens hebet adversamque fugit conterrita lucem', lf., printed in the CSEL edn. of Augustine's *Letters* (vol. 34, pp. 89-95). For a discussion of the poem (which also raises — not convincingly — the possibility that our Varro is not being referred to here) see I. Hadot, *Arts libéraux et philosophie dans la pensée antique* (Paris, 1984) 176-87.

here, merely to concede that he was an *anima ... docta et ingeniosa* (7.5) whom pagan mysteries prevented from finding the true god.

Augustine observes that Varro makes a distinction between *religio* and *superstitio* (6.9): 'the gods are feared (*timeri*) by the superstitious man as if they were enemies, but revered (*vereri*) by the religious man as if they were parents». In other words, *superstitio* is contrasted with *pietas*, as it is by Cicero[20]. Augustine can only praise this distinction, but he finds it vitiated by the hidden agenda that he imputes to Varro. It is bad enough that Varro commends the utility of civic religious practices that he knows to be fabrications (4.9, 4.27). But he is also accused of suggesting that the human edifice of state religion can be seen for what it is by *intellegentes*, so that his work — properly decoded by the sophisticated — can be read as a demolition of the two *theologiae* of which he disapproves in order to clear the way for the third, *theologia naturalis* (6.4). Augustine suggests that he was led into contradictions by wanting too much. He wanted to describe Roman religion as it was, and at the same time to attribute natural explanations to religious phenomena (7.23, 7.28)[21].

If there is a serious case in Augustine's criticism of Varro, as opposed to his tendentious polemic against him, then it rests on the uncovering of such contradictions and inconsistencies in his religious writings[22].

[20] Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.17.45; cf. 1.42.117, 2.28.71-2. See Augustine, *City of God* 4.30.

[21] See E. Rawson, *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London, 1985) 314.

[22] It did not seem necessary to refer in this paper to the fragment numbers in Cardauns' editions (n. 1) when discussing Augustine's Varro citations, but the reader is referred to those editions for *loci paralleli* and discussions of Varro's sources and views. I have given a more fully documented account of the genesis of the *City of God* outlined in the first pages of this paper in «Civitate dei (De-)», *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1.7/8 (1994) 969-1010, especially 970-8.

Thinking through History: Augustine's Method in the *City of God* and Its Ciceronian Dimension

When, in 412 or thereabouts, Augustine began to write the *City of God*, the Christian religion had enjoyed for a century a privileged position in the Roman Empire.[1] Indeed, if the Romans had shared our passion for celebrating anniversaries, they would, in 412, have been celebrating the centenary of the conversion of Constantine on the eve of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge—the battle in which Roman troops, for the first time, bore upon their standards the symbol of the Christian cross. Constantine's victory in 312 gave him control over the western part of the Empire. His enthusiasm for Christianity, which had been a persecuted religion only eight years previously, may have been boosted by military success: at all events, in the words of Timothy Barnes, "After . . . October 312 the emperor consistently thought of himself as God's servant, entrusted with a divine mission to convert the Roman Empire to Christianity."[2]

This is not the place to retell the story of the advance of Christianity in the fourth century.[3] It became, in effect, a new established religion, massively

1. This essay develops some themes in chapters 1 and 6 of my *Augustine's City of God: A Reader's Guide* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999).

2. T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

3. For the following see especially Averil Cameron, *The Later Roman Empire* (London: Fontana, 1993), chs. 4 and 5.

consolidated by imperial patronage, and enjoying financial and legal privileges. But if this amounted to a revolution in religious and cultural terms, the revolution did not extend to political institutions. There was no radical change in the organization of imperial, provincial, and local government. Constantine placed restrictions on the traditional[4] cultic expression of civic religion: sacrifice was prohibited, for example. One could argue that traditional religious belief, as opposed to cult, was tolerated. But edicts are not always indicators of enforcement, and prohibition of sacrifice was not seriously implemented in the western part of the Empire. There is evidence of sporadic action against expressions of traditional religion throughout the century, but the temples remained open for business, and it was not until late in the century that more sustained attempts to undermine and suppress civic traditions were made. In particular, laws of 391 and 392 promulgated by the emperor Theodosius banned private as well as public sacrifice and other cult, and prohibited use of temples (*Codex Theodosianus* 16,10,10–12). Again, these laws are as much symptoms of the gradual christianization of the governing elite and the growth of church influence, as they are evidence for persecution of traditional practices: they may also be indicators of the resilience of tradition.

Roman Tradition

Even in a heavily christianized area like Roman North Africa (where Augustine grew up, and had been a bishop since 395), there was tension between Christians and defenders of tradition. And traditional rites persisted: Augustine witnessed them as a schoolboy and a student in the 360s and 370s (*Ep.* 17,4). Offerings were made at the temple of Saturn in Carthage until the end of the century.[5] Augustine's correspondence informs us about two incidents when tensions erupted into violence. At Sufes, probably in 399, Christians overturned a statue of Hercules, and in the ensuing riot sixty Christians were

4. Here and elsewhere in this essay I use the term "traditional/ist" to refer to Roman state religion and its practitioners, not because I have any serious objection to the term "pagan" (by Augustine's day *paganus* was commonly applied to non-Christians: *Retractationes* 2,43,1), but because "traditional/ist" conveys better the pagans' own sense of what they were defending, and Christianity's consciousness, at this time, of its "newness" (see Ambrose, *Ep.* 18[73],23–24). Cf. G. Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) on "polytheist" (37–60) and "pagan" (38).

5. See C. Lepelley, *Les cités de l'Afrique romaine au Bas-Empire*, vol. 1 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1979) 350, and for the whole topic of pagan survivals in christianized North Africa, 350–95, a seminal account.

killed. But the local senate insisted that the church make good the damage to the statue (*Ep.* 50). At Calama in 408 pagans held an illegal religious procession which led to a riot and looting of Christian property (*Ep.* 91). We may suspect that such incidents were not isolated, but it is important to realize that they were played out against a background of relative prosperity and stability in North Africa. This was not a civilization in decay or upheaval: the institutions of municipal government continued unimpaired, and both Christians and traditionalists participated in them, enjoying the resultant prestige, lavishing munificence on their towns and cities.[6] The newly established Christian religion did not create new civic forms of expression, apart, of course, from the increasingly visible and impressive churches where bishops like Augustine preached and conducted their rites.

In the aftermath of the violence involving Christians and pagans at Calama, a cultured traditionalist called Nectarius wrote to Augustine, requesting his intervention on behalf of fellow pagans charged with holding the illegal procession and attacking a Christian church in the town. We have four letters (*Epp.* 90, 91, 103 and 104) from this correspondence, two each from Nectarius and Augustine. Nectarius's appeal is made on behalf of the civic loyalties of those accused. He writes:

> I pass over the importance of love of one's country, since you appreciate it. For it is the only love which, by right, surpasses the affection felt for one's parents. If there is any measure or limit to the care [for one's country] that the good should have, we have on this occasion deserved to be excused from its obligations. But since the love for, and attraction of, one's city grows day by day, the closer one's life is to its end, the more one wants to leave one's native place free from harm and flourishing. (*Ep.* 90)

Nectarius understands this civic ideal to have a transcendental, afterlife dimension, as a further letter to Augustine makes clear. In it, Nectarius writes of

> [This city] which the great god, and those souls who have deserved well of him, inhabit, which all laws strive towards by different roads and ways, which we cannot express in speech, but might perhaps discover by thought . . . of which most learned men say that, for those who deserve it, a dwelling-place is prepared in the heavens, so that a kind of advancement to the celestial world is proffered to those who have deserved well of their native cities, and these live closer to god, who are shown to have brought salvation to their country by their counsel or their deeds. (*Ep.* 103,2)

6. See C. Lepelley, "Africa (A)," in *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1, 1/2 (1986) 180–205, here 183–86.

Nectarius is clearly alluding to the celestial afterlife of deserving Roman statesmen described in the so-called *Dream of Scipio*, the finale of Cicero's masterpiece of political theory, the *De re publica*, to which I shall refer in this essay, with some misgivings, as Cicero's *Republic*.[7] Even before receiving this further letter, Augustine had put his finger on the source of Nectarius's idealism, recognizing the source of his quotation of the phrase "any measure or limit to the care [for one's country] that the good should have." It is, Augustine writes, "those very books on the state, from which you have absorbed that affection of the most devoted citizen" (*Ep.* 91,3). This part of Cicero's work is lost, but it becomes clear from what Augustine says that, in it, one of the interlocutors had asserted that there "is no measure or limit to the care that the good should have for their country" (*Ep.* 91,1,3): it is an assertion of which Augustine approves (*Ep.* 91,1). He approves because he believes that it translates easily into Christian terms:

> For which reason we would wish also to have one such as yourself as a citizen of a certain celestial country, for which, in devoted love, to the best of our ability, we run risks and labor among those for whom we take thought, that they may apprehend it: it would be our wish that you might conclude that there is no measure and limit to the care for even a small part of it that a man in exile on this earth should have. (*Ep.* 91,1).

The moral values advocated by Cicero are, Augustine argues, realized in the Christian church, and prepare those who live by them to attain, with divine help, "to a dwelling-place in the eternal and celestial city" (*Ep.* 91,1). In defending official Christian opposition to traditional civic cult Augustine cites Cicero's critique of stories of the immorality of the gods (*Ep.* 91,4–5), in terms that anticipate the polemic of the *City of God*, including its method of retortion (here using the arguments of Cicero, a hero of the traditionalists, against them).[8] Cicero's views on the afterlife are, Augustine argues, consistent with Christian beliefs (*Ep.*104,3). Throughout this exchange, which antedates the writing of the *City of God* by a few years, Augustine defines the Christian

7. Cf. esp. *Rep.* 6,13. On the term *res publica* see M. Schofield, "Cicero's Definition of *Res Publica*," in *Cicero the Philosopher*, ed. J. G. F. Powell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) 63–83, here 66–69. See the new translation of the work by N. Rudd, *Cicero: The Republic and The Laws* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) xxxv, for the translation of *res publica*.

8. On the practice of retortion in early Christian apologetic see, for Arnobius's use of Porphyry, M. B. Simmons, *Arnobius of Sicca: Religious Conflict and Competition in the Age of Diocletian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) 243–63. Augustine cites the same Ciceronian critique of stories about the gods in *Ep.* 91,4 and *Civ.* 2,9 and 11: it is usually assumed to come from Book 4 of the *De re publica*, and printed in Ziegler's Teubner ed. as *Rep.* 4,11–13.

concept of the society of the good in language that foreshadows the later work—"city," "native country," "country of the flesh" (*Epp.* 91,6; 104,17). The importance of the correspondence with Nectarius lies in the way in which Augustine engages in debate on the basis of common assumptions about cities, real and ideal. The tone is civil rather than polemical, and this may be due as much to Augustine's sense of being at ease with Cicero's (and Nectarius's) views as to the delicate nature of the correspondence. The assumptions shared with Nectarius allow Augustine to articulate his own vision of the city.

When Augustine writes the *City of God*, Cicero's *Republic* is one of the key works informing his engagement with the values of the Roman tradition. Because large portions of Cicero's dialogue are lost, Augustine is an important source for its recovery. But I am not primarily concerned here with that aspect of the reception of Cicero by Augustine. Nor do I wish to speculate about the intriguing similarity of situation that led to the writing of the two works. Cicero's *Republic* was written against the background of political chaos and violence and the breakdown of Republican government in the 50s BCE.[9] Augustine's *City of God* took shape in the aftermath of the spectacular, if largely symbolic, demonstration of the vulnerability of the Roman Empire to the Goths, the sack of the city of Rome in 410. Rather, what I want to argue is that Cicero's use of Roman history in his dialogue influences Augustine's understanding of history in general, and that Augustine's use of history as an element in his argument in the *City of God* both develops and reacts against Cicero's method. In the correspondence with Nectarius, we find a positive use by Augustine of Cicero, exploiting an afterlife myth in Cicero's dialogue. That part of the *Republic* plays no role in the *City of God*.[10] Nor is Augustine concerned with Cicero's analysis of constitutions or forms of government in Book 1 of the *Republic*. But there is evidence that he used the account of Roman history in the second book of Cicero's work, although the explicit references to that book in the *City of God* are chiefly to spectacular details about Rome's early kings, such as the account of Romulus's deification (22,6) and the death of Tullus Hostilius by thunderbolt (3,15). More often, Augustine uses Cicero as a critic of his own society and religion, citing his polemic against the theater from

9. For the background to Cicero's *Republic* see E. Rawson, *Cicero: A Portrait*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983) 146–63; for the sack of Rome in 410 see P. Heather, *Goths and Romans, 332–489* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) 213–18.

10. The reference at *Civ.* 22,28 to Cicero's comments on Plato's myth of Er does not necessarily derive from *Rep.* 6, as E. Heck, *Die Bezeugung von Ciceros Schrift De re publica* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1966) 60f. (cf. 142) rightly argues.

Book 4 of the *Republic* (2,8–13) or his critique of the political and moral decline of the late Roman Republic in Book 5 of the dialogue (2,21). All this is familiar to readers of Augustine: but does a more subtle use of Cicero underlie Augustine's argument?

Although Plato's *Republic* is an important and influential model for Cicero, Cicero also stresses the differences between his method in the *Republic* and Plato's. At the beginning of the dialogue Cicero argues that moral excellence (*virtus*) can only be realized in political action: it is not merely an intellectual possession. The early Greek lawgivers, such as Solon and Lycurgus, were also responsible for the inculcation of the social virtues (*Rep.* 1,2). This is not explicit criticism of Plato, although it suggests that an implicit contrast is being drawn between two approaches to the relation between morality and politics. Elsewhere, however, the contrast is made explicit. At the beginning of Book 2 Cicero's protagonist, Scipio, outlines the reason for the account of Roman history which is to follow: it is to show how Roman political institutions developed gradually, reaching their apogee in the early Republic. Scipio is made to refer to the first work of Roman historiography, written in the mid-second century BCE, the *Origines* or *Beginnings*, and its author Cato the Elder. Cato argued that the strength of the Roman constitution lay in the fact that it was not the work of a single legislator, as Greek constitutions were traditionally understood to be, but that it was rather the achievement of many politicians over a long period of time (*Rep.* 2,2). The biological metaphor of growth to strength is invoked here and elsewhere in Cicero's dialogue, just as the historical explanation of the realization of the perfect state is contrasted with Plato's invention of a fictional ideal (*Rep.* 2,1–3). The imputation of invention to Plato is a traditional point, and other elements of Scipio's account here echo the famous account by the Greek historian of Rome's history, Polybius, in Book 6 of his *Histories*, written, like Cato's *Origines*, in the second century BCE. Polybius had also used the biological metaphor of Rome's development (*Hist.* 6,57), and had contrasted Rome's constitution with those of the Greek lawgivers (*Hist.* 6,43–50) and with Plato's, criticizing Plato's republic for not being tested in action and comparing it to a perfectly sculpted but lifeless statue (*Hist.* 6,47).[11] But there are also differences between Polybius and Cicero. For Polybius, the biological model highlights the inevitable decline, as well as the growth, of the state, whereas Cicero allows the possibility of an immortal state

11. The biological metaphor in Polybius: F. W. Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972) 142–46.

(*Hist.* 6,57; *Rep.* 3,34), even if political violence threatens to undermine the ancestral constitution and leads to the death of the *res publica*. Again, Polybius's metaphor of growth serves his belief that the progress of states and constitutions is a natural one (*Hist.* 6,10), whereas Cicero insists that the rational planning of successive statesmen brings about the gradually perfected Roman Republic. Cicero's approach is non-deterministic, and is based on the activity of reason in controlling natural processes.[12]

The *City of God*

If we turn from Cicero to Augustine's *City of God*, it becomes immediately apparent that Augustine's account of Roman history in Books 2 and 3 of that work is not based, in any broad sense, on Cicero's version in Book 2 of the *Republic*. Augustine's agenda is to demonstrate that Rome's gods never saved Rome from disasters. His polemical aim is to accumulate evidence for evils and misfortunes throughout Roman history. Even Sallust—for Augustine the historian of the decline of the Roman Republic—is not free from Golden Age assumptions about the early Republic. Yet Sallust also stresses the presence of fear and injustice in Roman society (*Civ.* 2,17–18). By contrast, Cicero's account of even potentially lurid episodes plays down their sensational and disturbing aspects. This is the case with his version of the Romulus story (*Rep.* 2,4–20), for example.[13] The differences between Cicero and the account of Romulus in Livy and historians are obvious, and this is because Cicero wishes to stress the institutional and constitutional aspects in his narrative. Within the dialogue, Scipio, the narrator of the narrative of Book 2, is told by another interlocutor that his account is encomiastic (*Rep.* 2,64). Thus, although Augustine, in the course of his historical polemic (*Civ.* 2,21), engages in critical discussion with Cicero's definition of *res publica* in *Rep.* 1,39, this discussion does not emerge from any explicit consideration of Cicero's vision of Roman history.

It may, however, be possible to discern a pervasive, if subtle, Ciceronian influence in the reason given by Augustine for the political achievements of Rome, and especially its Empire. Augustine famously states that it is because of divine providence that Rome became a great power, and he links Roman power with the virtues of self-sacrifice and valor, illustrated by historical examples

12. Cf. *Rep.* 2,30; 2,45,2; 2,57,1; and *Cicero: De Re Publica*, ed. J. E. G. Zetzel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) ad loc.

13. Zetzel 160–61; cf. Zetzel 220 on the story of Julius and Sestus in *Rep.* 2,61.

in *City of God* 5,12–19. Augustine's method is to demythologize imperial ideology, to eliminate the argument that it was Rome's gods that made Rome great. Like his Christian contemporaries Ambrose and Prudentius, Augustine emphasizes the part played by human qualities in the Roman achievement. To understand the significance of this view, we must stand back a little from the uses of history in Augustine and Cicero, and consider some theoretical assumptions underlying their political theorizing. Augustine insists that it is the moral standing of individuals that establishes the quality of a society. Good societies are, in essence, multiplications of good individuals:

> [L]et us refuse to be fooled by empty bombast, to let the edge of our critical faculties be blunted by high-sounding words like "peoples," "realms," "provinces." Let us set before our mind's eye two men; for the individual man is, like a letter in a word, an element . . . out of which a community or realm is built up, however vast its territorial possessions. (*Civ.* 4,3, trans. H. Bettenson, modified)

Augustine then goes on to contrast a rich man, under stress and unhappy, with a modest, lovable, kindly poor man:

> It is the same with two families, two peoples, or two realms. The same canon of judgment applies as in the case of the two men. (Ibid.)

Justice in the individual mirrors justice in the state, and vice versa. To some extent, Augustine may appear to be more like Plato than Cicero in this respect. The focus in Cicero's dialogue is more on states, governments, institutions, and their justice as a series of relations that are not reducible to justice as the virtue of an individual. Yet it is perhaps a question of emphasis rather than a radical difference. For both Cicero and Augustine believe that the moral quality of individuals is a more important formative influence on the quality of government than any kind of constitution.[14] Cicero argues that there is interaction, and mutual interdependence, between social traditions and good citizens. Individuals are the product of, and conserve, institutions:

> [O]ur ancestral way of life produced outstanding men, and those excellent men preserved the old way of life and the institutions of their forefathers. (*Rep.* 5,1, trans. N. Rudd)

This part of the *Republic* is known to us only from its approving citation in *City of God* 2,21. In the same chapter, Augustine points out that just government, in Cicero's view, is possible under each of the three kinds of simple and good constitution, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy (cf. *Rep.* 1,42). Even

14. On the preceding see Zetzel 14, 24f.

if Augustine never engages in a discussion of the merits of the various forms of constitution, he will not have found Scipio's preference for monarchy (*Rep.* 1,54–61) surprising, in view of his assumption of the fact of a kind of monarchical rule in the later Empire, an assumption that becomes explicit when he talks about the desired qualities and achievements of Christian emperors (*Civ.* 5,24–26). It is not surprising that Augustine is attracted to the analogies adduced by Scipio in support of monarchy: the analogy with the single divine ruler of the universe (*Rep.* 1,56) and that with musical harmony (*Rep.* 2,69).[15] The analogy with musical harmony comes at the end of the second book of the *Republic*, and we know it from Augustine's citation of it (*Civ.* 2,21). The analogy with the single ruler of the universe resurfaces in an apology for imperialism in Book 3 of the *Republic*, to which Augustine alludes in *City of God* 19,21, in a discussion of what it means to serve God properly.

We seem to have moved some distance away from the core concern of this essay with the role of arguments based on history in Cicero and Augustine. Yet the preceding observations on theoretical assumptions in our two authors are crucial to the rest of my argument. When Augustine, briefly, considers the elements of the definition of a state (*Civ.* 4,4), he starts from a Ciceronian premise, and his definition is presented, in Ciceronian fashion, as a historical development. The Ciceronian premise is that of the reluctant sceptic in the dialogue, Philus, who, in Book 3 of the *Republic*, propounds the argument that a state cannot exist without injustice. Augustine's paradigm state is a state without justice, developed over time from a criminal gang:

> Remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms? A gang is a group of men under the command of a leader, bound by a compact of association, in which the plunder is divided according to an agreed convention. If this villainy wins so many recruits from the ranks of the demoralized that it acquires territory, establishes a base, captures cities and subdues peoples, it then openly arrogates to itself the title of kingdom, which is conferred on it in the eyes of the world, not by the renouncing of aggression but by the attainment of impunity. (*Civ.* 4,4)

The several elements here—a leader's command, the compact of association, agreed division of plunder, many recruits, acquisition of territory, attainment of impunity—form a sketch of an account of society's structuring that is expressed in negative terms, but is nonetheless comprehensive enough

15. See Zetzel 26.

to be a working definition.[16] Its coloring suits Augustine's polemic against the violence of actual societies. It could not have been composed without its Ciceronian antecedents, including the whole question of what constitutes a *res publica*. And there is evidence that, when polemic is not his immediate aim, Augustine subscribes to a gradualist, progressivist version of history. His version of the biological model of history's, especially biblical history's, development through a series of phases or "ages" (*aetates*) is used in a limited way in Books 15 and 16 of the *City of God*, with explicit reference to the analogy with the periods of human life in 16,43. Furthermore, human inventions that are the basis of civilized life are located chronologically in Book 18, where Augustine synchronizes events of biblical and secular history. Thus he notes the establishment of a legal system and a calendar in the Argolid, and the invention of writing in Egypt (18,3), and the importance of astronomy and other sciences in the unfolding of Egyptian civilization (18,39). Chronology, with Varro adduced as an authority, is important for Augustine in his argument against Egyptian claims concerning the antiquity of their sciences (18,39–40). Thus the notion of the articulation of human progress is not peripheral to Augustine's argument. Varro may have been as influential as Cicero in this respect, but what is important is the perception of social structures from a historical perspective.

In the first eleven chapters of Book 5 of the *City of God*, Augustine, using Cicero's *De fato (On Fate)*, argues against determinism and fate in human affairs. We have seen that a non-deterministic approach to history characterizes Cicero's narrative in the *Republic*. But where Cicero insists on the vital role of human reason in the ordering and control of human nature and the natural processes of social life, Augustine wishes to stress the role of divine reason, in the form of the providence that guides human political achievement. This achievement, in the case of Rome, is sketched in the second half of Book 5 of the *City of God*. In other words, Augustine's ideas are developed within the parameters of a characteristic Ciceronian argument, both in their denial of strict determinism and their advocacy of the place of rational order in Rome's acquisition of empire.

For Augustine, the object of history is none other than the study of the mind and will of God. This idea, which is implicit in the *City of God*, is developed in a seminal work of Augustinian hermeneutics, begun several years

16. See O. Hoffe, "Positivismus plus Moralismus: Zu Augustinus' eschatologischer Staatstheorie," in *Augustinus: De civitate dei*, ed. C. Horn (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997) 259–87, here 266–74.

earlier, his *De doctrina christiana* or *On Christian Teaching*.[17] There (2,38–44) Augustine, while talking about various human sciences and pseudo-sciences, distinguishes between "human institutions" (giving the examples of astrology, the alphabet, the fine arts, and shorthand) and "divine institutions," by which he means "those elements of human tradition which men did not establish but discovered by investigation." As examples he gives history, medicine, and joinery. Why history? Augustine says that history "describes human institutions of the past." But, as the past cannot be undone, history discovers pre-existing data by investigation (the characteristic of a "divine institution") and these constitute "part of the history of time, whose creator and controller is God." Historical study leads to an understanding of God's part in human affairs. This coheres with what Augustine says in the *City of God* about the role of providence in Roman history.

In Book 18 of the *City of God* the events of non-biblical history are synchronized with biblical events. The chronographical tradition informs Augustine's method, and in particular the *Canons* of Eusebius, which had been translated and continued by Jerome.[18] Augustine's account is impressionistic and often polemical: he believes that earthly kingdoms are under the power of the apostate angels (16,17). But chronography, by its comparative nature, extends the scope of history. As Momigliano pointed out many years ago, Christian historiographers of the fourth century were universal historians.[19] Traces of this universalism are found in Augustine. The scope of history in the *City of God* extends from the creation in Book 11 to the final judgment and the end of history in the final book of the work. Within this panorama, earthly kingdoms have a limited life span. Augustine's schematic account focuses on what he believes to be the two great examples of empire, Assyria (which he confuses with Babylon) and Rome, one eastern and one western power. For him, all other kingdoms are "like appendages" (18,2) of these two, and Rome is a "second Babylon" (16,17; 18,22). The rise of Rome follows immediately upon the fall of the Assyrian empire. Thus, despite the apparently chaotic violence of

17. See the translation with notes by R. P. H. Green, *Augustine: On Christian Teaching* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), from which I have taken some of the phrases cited in the following.

18. See A. A. Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius and Greek Chronographic Tradition* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1979); J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome* (London: Duckworth, 1975) 72–75.

19. A. Momigliano, "Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century AD," in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. A. Momigliano (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963) 79–99.

the succession of empires, there is a pattern to these historical events. The wish to synchronize biblical and secular history underpins, but also articulates and emphasizes, the succession theme. What Augustine says about the reason for Rome's power in Book 18 echoes what he has said in the earlier parts of the work:

> It was God's design to conquer the world through her [Rome], to unite the world into the single community of the Roman commonwealth and the Roman laws, and so to impose peace throughout its length and breadth. (18,22)

But this view of Rome's achievement, which Augustine found in the Augustan poets, and above all in Virgil, and which is prepared in Cicero's attitude to Roman rule, is now seen in the broader context of world history. Augustine never refers explicitly to the conversion of Constantine in the *City of God*, and, unlike Constantine's apologist Eusebius, does not interpret christianization as the fulfillment of Rome's historical destiny. But he nonetheless sees the christianization of emperors, who succeed those who persecuted Christians and who persecute pagans in their turn, as the most recent significant outcome of the historical process (18,50).

There is a stronger Ciceronian element in another aspect of Augustine's sense of history. Augustine's extrapolation of divine providence—the rational element—from Roman history is applied to his interpretation of biblical history itself. Cicero's account of Roman history places emphasis on the role of great individual statesmen, the ones who are immortalized in the finale of the *Republic*. When Cicero describes the true art of politics, he describes, in Book 5, the qualities found in an individual leader, the *rector rei publicae*. Augustine's account of biblical history also focuses on individuals, such as Abraham and Moses. When Moses is introduced as leader and lawgiver of the Jews in 18,11, we may observe that no place was found for this detail in the chronology of the earlier books, which dealt with biblical history and concentrated on Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. Augustine could have found a place for a more detailed consideration of Moses in Books 16 and 17 had he so wished. But the synchronization scheme of Book 18 allows him to allude to Moses in that most traditional of functions of the statesman in Greek and Roman political theory, the lawgiver, and in the context of an account of the development of Greece and Rome in which he is remarkably silent about the role of lawgivers. There is no mention in Book 18 of Lycurgus or Solon, and no mention of Numa's lawgiving in the reference to him in 18,24. Yet Augustine knows of Solon's and Numa's laws and alludes to them in another context (2,16), where a different kind of polemical point is being made. These omissions emphasize the uniqueness of Moses in Augustine's account, but it is a uniqueness constructed in traditional terms that Cicero would have understood.

Conclusion: Cicero and Augustine

Cicero's history of the *res publica* climaxed in the model constitution of the early Republic. In a sense, Augustine's account of institutions climaxes in the establishment of the Christian church (*Civ.* 18,48–53). The church is not presented in Augustine as the equivalent of a political society. Yet it shares some of the undesirable characteristics of secular institutions. It is not free from dissension. Heretics and other dissidents are a source of scandal and dismay. Distress and anguish are thus features of church society even in a christianized empire, though it is some consolation that these test the patience and wisdom of Christians, as well as giving scope for persuasive teaching and the practice of discipline (18,51). Like history itself, the church has a wider scope:

> The church proceeds in this world, an alien, in these evil days, not merely since the time of the bodily presence of Christ and his apostles, but since Abel himself, the first righteous man, whom his impious brother killed, and from then on until the end of time, among the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God. (18,51)

These inevitable differences between Cicero and Augustine serve to remind us that we cannot hope to adapt Augustine's views on the origins and development of societies and on the potential of societies to achieve justice in such a way that they become Ciceronian in some uncomplicated respect. Augustine's view of political life is predominantly bleak, although one must always be sensitive to the rhetoric of the moment in his writings, and remember that, for everything negative that he says about political activity, he recognizes the importance of human institutions in preserving social order. There is a peace of the earthly city (*Civ.* 19). What I wish to argue is, not that there is an identity of views and approaches in Augustine and Cicero, but rather that Cicero is a fertile source for Augustine, in a subtle and sometimes implicit way. Cicero's historically founded approach is fruitful for Augustine, because Augustine's biblically founded approach is, in essence, historical. Cicero's insistence on the role of reason in political development helps Augustine articulate his concept of a rational divine providence in history. Cicero's emphasis on the moral qualities of citizens, and his relative indifference to constitutional forms—despite his gesture of approval for an interpretation of the Roman constitution as a mixed one (*Rep.* 1,45; 1,69)—provide Augustine with a theoretical focus on human morality as the basis of political order. The optimistic appropriation of Cicero by Augustine in the correspondence with Nectarius remains a formative factor in the argument of the *City of God*.

Sense-Perception and Imagination in Boethius, Philosophiae Consolatio 5 m. 4*

The second half of Book Four of BOETHIUS' *Philosophiae Consolatio*, and its fifth book, are chiefly celebrated for their subtle discussion of the related themes of chance, divine providence and foreknowledge, and human free will.[1] BOETHIUS argues his position with great vigour and clarity, though it is a position that is heavily indebted to Neoplatonist antecedents.[2] His argument is chiefly sustained by the extended prose passages: the intervening poems are, for the most part, not memorable, nor do they give expression to central themes and images of the work with the same intensity as earlier poems in the *Consolatio*.[3] 4 m. 7, the much criticized[4] moral exegesis of myths surrounding the figures of Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Hercules, is an enigmatic exception. 5 m. 4 has attracted as little attention as most of the other metra of this part of the work. But upon close inspection it reveals problems of interpretation and unsuspected complexities. It is a remarkable blend of polemic, philosophical metaphor, and technical detail. To offer an interpretation of a poem with such a range of reference to Albrecht Dihle, who has so greatly en-

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1 See especially the commentary by R.W. SHARPLES, *Cicero: On Fate and Boethius: The Consolation of Philosophy IV. 5-7, V* (Warminster 1991).

2 See F. KLINGNER, *De Boethii Consolatione Philosophiae* (Berlin 1921, reprinted Zürich / Dublin 1966) 95-112; R. SORABJI, *Time, Creation and the Continuum* (London 1983) 253-267; K. VERRYCKEN, "The Metaphysics of Ammonius son of Hermeias", in: R. SORABJI (ed.), *Aristotle Transformed: The Ancient Commentators and their Influence* (London 1990) 199-231.

3 e.g. 2 m. 8; 3 m. 9; 3 m. 12 ; 4 m. 1. On the metra see H. SCHEIBLE, *Die Gedichte in der Consolatio Philosophiae des Boethius* (Heidelberg 1972); G. O'DALY, *The Poetry of Boethius* (London 1991).

4 See e.g. J. GRUBER, *Kommentar zu Boethius De Consolatione Philosophiae* (Berlin/New York 1978) 372; cf. O'DALY (n. 3) 220-34 for a defence of the poem's importance.

riched our understanding of widely diverse areas of ancient literature and thought, seems particularly appropriate.

The poem may be divided into four sections, and I comment on each of them in turn.

I

Quondam Porticus attulit
obscuros nimium senes,
qui sensus et imagines
e corporibus extimis
credant mentibus imprimi,
ut quondam[5] *celeri stilo*
mos est aequore paginae
quae nullas habeat notas
pressas figere litteras.

"The Porch once produced extremely obscure old men, such as believe that sensations and images are imprinted upon minds from external bodies, just as at times the swift stylus makes its customary impressed letters on the smooth surface of a tablet which has no marks."

The opening line announces that the Stoics are to be the initial focus of the poem's attention. Their theory of impressions (φαντασίαι), and of the way in which sense-impressions of the external world may lead to the formation of concepts, is to be characterized and criticized. BOETHIUS the Platonist is not unreservedly critical of the Stoics (no ancient Neoplatonist was):[6] Lady Philosophy recognizes Stoic martyrs like SENECA, CANIUS, and SORANUS to be *nostris moribus instituti* (1.3.10; cf. 1.3.9; 1.4.27), and the poet LUCAN to be *familiaris noster* (4.6.33). But the details of Stoic epistemology are another matter.

Why are the Stoics *senes*? Probably because they are philosophers from the remote past, just as HESIOD is for VERGIL *Ascraeus senex (ecl.* 6.70), or LUCILIUS

5 BIELER (*CCL* 94, p. 98) questioned the reading *quondam* here. F. TRONCARELLI, "Una nuova edizione della Consolatio Philosophiae di Boezio nel Corpus Christianorum", *Scriptorium* 41 (1987) 133-50 (here 139) reports the emendation *quodam* of GRAZIANO DI S. TERESA. *quondam* (6) repeats the *quondam* of line 1. A. GRIFFITHS' emendation to *quosdam* in line 1 is adopted by SHARPLES (n. 1) 144 (the apparatus there incorrectly gives GRIFFITHS' proposal as an emendation of line 6: cf. SHARPLES 50).

6 See W. THEILER, "Plotin zwischen Platon und Stoa", *Les sources de Plotin, Entretiens Fondation Hardt* 5 (Geneva 1960) 65-103; A. GRAESER, *Plotinus and the Stoics* (Leiden 1972); A.C. LLOYD, *The Anatomy of Neoplatonism* (Oxford 1990) 142-54. BOETHIUS, however, avoids detailed confrontation with Stoic logic in his commentaries: see J. MAGEE, *Boethius on Signification and Mind* (Leiden 1989) 101.

is a *senex* for HORACE (*serm.* 2.1.34).[7] But in those passages there is veneration for poetic masters and models implied in the use of the term *senex*: BOETHIUS' use of the term implies no such admiration. Nor can it merely refer to the longevity of the early Stoics (though CLEANTHES, in particular, lived to be 99). It may be that, taken with *obscuros nimium* (2), the idea of figures from the ancient past is combined with the suggestion that their views represent the confused meanderings of old men. For BOETHIUS is being ironical. He applies to the Stoics an epithet traditionally associated with HERACLITUS, *obscurus* (e.g. CICERO, *div.* 2.133). It may be transferred to them because of their known doctrinal indebtedness to HERACLITUS. But there is another probable reason why BOETHIUS calls the Stoics *obscuri.* In ancient polemical attacks upon the Stoics it is frequently alleged that, despite their claims for the self-evident clarity (ἐνάργεια, *euidentia*) of cognitive impressions, and their arguments that common conceptions (κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι) are the natural criteria of truth, their doctrines contradict common sense. Or it is said that they themselves are often at odds with their own common conceptions, or that these are contrary to common sense. This is the polemical approach of PLUTARCH's *De communibus notitiis* (1058 E-F; 1060 A; 1068 D);[8] there the Stoic claim that their doctrine is in agreement with nature is repeatedly attacked. Accusations of verbal obscurity and novelty are also levelled against them. In CICERO (*fin.* 3.5) it is said of ZENO that he *non tamen rerum inuentor fuit quam uerborum nouorum*, or of the Stoics in general that *noua uerba fingunt, deserunt usitata* (*fin.* 4.7).[9] BOETHIUS reflects these attitudes. His attack on the substance of Stoic epistemological claims is prefaced by the briefest of allusions to the polemical tradition.

It was ZENO who spoke of the impression (φαντασία) being an "imprint" (τύπωσις) on the mind (SEXT. EMP. *adv. math.* 7.228, 230), and CLEANTHES who compared it with the imprint made by a signet-ring upon wax (ibid. 228), possibly following ARISTOTLE's adaptation of the metaphor to sense-perception (*De An.* 2.12, 424 a 17-20).[10] What ARISTOTLE was adapting was PLATO's use of the wax block model in *Theaetetus* 191a-196d, where it is employed as part of an attempt to account for the ways in which we learn or memorize something perceived, or things that we think of ourselves (191c-e). The model is also used later in the *Theaetetus* discussion to represent the way in which the objects of new perceptions may be identified by "fitting" them to the imprints already on the block (192b, 193cd, etc.). Now Socrates, in *Theaetet.* 195b-196d, goes on to criticize the wax

7 Cf. HORACE, *epist.* 2.1.56.

8 See H. CHERNISS (ed.), *Plutarch's Moralia* 13/2 (Cambridge, Mass./London 1976) 624-44 and nn. ad loc. On the formation of PLUTARCH's polemics see CHERNISS 397-400. For a general discussion of PLUTARCH's anti-Stoic arguments see D. BABUT, *Plutarque et le Stoïcisme* (Paris 1969) 22-69 (BABUT is criticized by CHERNISS 624-7, 646).

9 Cf. *fin.* 4.56; 5.22.

10 See in general L. STROUX, *Vergleich und Metapher in der Lehre des Zenon von Kition* (Diss. Heidelberg 1965) 51-71.

block model as an inadequate account of false judgement. But the effectiveness of the metaphor remains (cf. *Theaetet.* 209c), and it was applied, after PLATO, to the concept (which PLATO himself did not have) of sense-impressions.[11] Despite Chrysippus' elucidation of the imprint metaphor — that it describes an "alteration" (ἑτεροίωσις) of the mind (SEXT. EMP. *adv. math.* 7.230) — it is not surprising that BOETHIUS uses the vivid wax block metaphor for its effectiveness in conjuring up the notion, which he rejects, of a passive mind constantly moulded by the impressions to which it is subject. PLOTINUS has recourse to the metaphor for precisely the same reasons (4.6.1).[12] But BOETHIUS the writer is attracted by the variant version of the metaphor.[13] In *Theaetetus* 191d it is the impression made by a signet-ring on wax that is alluded to, and ARISTOTLE and CLEANTHES follow that model. But BOETHIUS speaks of the imprints made by the stylus on a wax writing-tablet: *stilo*, 6, and *pressas ... litteras*, 9, made this clear; *aequore*, 8, is used elsewhere of mirror-surfaces[14] (and so appropriately anticipates the mirror reference in 14) and represents the smooth surface of the wax-tablet before anything is incised upon it; *paginae* (8) refers to the wax-tablet itself as the material upon which something is written.[15] The writing model (as opposed to the signet-ring version) is also found in AETIUS 4.11.1 (= *Dox. Graec.* 400.4-8), where, however, the metaphor is that of a sheet of paper (χάρτης) rather than a writing tablet. BOETHIUS is an author particularly concerned with the relations between thought and writing: it is not surprising that he should adapt this version of the metaphor, even when he is about to deny its suitability in an account of the mind's perceptive processes.

II

Sed mens si propiis uigens
nihil motibus explicat,
sed tantum patiens iacet
notis subdita corporum
cassasque in speculi uicem
rerum reddit imagines,
unde haec sic animis uiget
cernens omnia notio?

11 See M. BURNYEAT, *The Theaetetus of Plato* (Indianapolis, Ind. 1990) 100-101.

12 The insistence on the active role of the mind in sense-perception is characteristically Neoplatonic. For PLOTINUS see H.J. BLUMENTHAL, *Plotinus' Psychology* (The Hague 1971) 70-4; for AUGUSTINE see G. O'DALY, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (London 1987) 84-7.

13 Cf. ARISTOTLE, *De an.* 3.4, 430a1-2. BOETHIUS elsewhere lists variants (wax, marble, paper) of the metaphor: *In Perih.* 2.34.13ff.

14 LUCRETIUS 4.107, 290; PRUDENTIUS, *Peristef.* 11.185-6 (of a mirror-like surface). AUSONIUS, *Ephemeris* 7.13 uses *aequor cereum* of a wax tablet (see GRUBER (n. 4) 402).

15 Cf. AUSONIUS, *Ephemeris* 7.11; PRUDENTIUS, *Peristef.* 9.50: see *ThLL* s.v. (col. 86.3-8).

"But if the mind clarifies nothing through the energy of its own movements, but is merely subjected passively to the marks from bodies, and reflects empty images of things, like a mirror, whence is this thought that sees all things so strong in minds?"

The argument is pursued in a series of questions, extending from line 10 to line 25. The reader is reminded of the questions of 5 m. 3.1-24, expressing bafflement over the difficulty of reconciling divine providence and foreknowledge with human free will. In that poem it is only in the last question (20-24) that the beginnings of an answer are given. In 5 m. 4, on the other hand, the answer is revealed in the first question, in the concept of the dynamic mind evoked in 16-17. This notion of the mind's latent power, realized in philosophy, has been gradually elaborated in sections of the work preceding 5 m. 4, in a sequence beginning with the first extended evocation of the themes of recollection and introspection in 3 m. 11. Now the mind is characterized by emphatic insistence upon its energy: *uigens* (10), *uiget* (16), *uis* (18), *uires* (31), *uigor* (35). The language is Lucretian, the *uiuida uis animi* of 1.72; ... *animi* ... *natura* ... *quibus e rebus* ... *uigeret*, 4.26-7. In contrast to this concept of the powerful mind, the Stoic notion, it is suggested, is that of a mind merely reflecting the external world as in a mirror, dealing in impressions (*imagines*, 15) only. BOETHIUS is putting the Stoic claims about impressions into a Platonic context that purports to establish their true status. He does so by innuendo rather than by examination of those claims: there is no attempt to confront the Stoic discussions of what makes impressions cognitive, or of the roles of assent and rational judgement in establishing truth. By implication, Stoic impressions are of the same status as the objects of εἰκασία in the Line simile of *Republic* VI: these include shadows and reflections in water (510a). They are like the reflections of things in water, and εἴδωλα generally, that the prisoners released from the Cave must first look at, because their sight is too weak to look upon the things themselves (*Rep.* 7, 516a). Or they are like the εἴδωλα in water or in mirrors of *Sophist* 239d, which exist, but are not the real things whose likenesses they are (240b-c).[16] What is emphasized here by BOETHIUS is the low cognitive status of Stoic impressions, their state of both being and not being, suggested in the epithet *cassas* (14).

III

Quae uis singula perspicit
aut quae cognita diuidit?
Quae diuisa recolligit
alternumque legens iter

16 On the Platonic background to 10-17 see SCHEIBLE (n. 3) 167.

nunc summis caput inserit,
nunc decedit in infima,
tum sese referens sibi
ueris falsa redarguit?
Haec est efficiens magis
longe causa potentior
quam quae materiae modo
impressas patitur notas.

"What power perceives individual things, or divides the things that are known? What [power] collects again the things that are divided and, moving now this way now that, at one time lifts its head to the heights, at another descends to the lowest level, and then returning to itself rejects what is false by means of the truth? Rather, a cause produces these things that is more powerful by far than one which, like matter, experiences marks that are impressed upon it."

Lines 18-20 allude unmistakably to the Platonic method of collection and division, the definitional procedure employed and partly explained in a number of later Platonic dialogues, *Phaedrus, Sophist, Politicus,* and *Philebus*. It is not clear whether *singula* (18) refers to particular objects or to individual Forms, any more than it is clear whether PLATO (in *Sophist* 253d and *Politicus* 285a-b, for example) is talking about particulars or Forms. The term *cognita* (19) probably denotes the generic idea, the class or genus of which the related Forms (εἴδη) are the species, as in *Phaedr.* 265d3-4, el ff. It is possible that *singula* (18) already refers to single generic ἰδέαι, the *cognita* which are then divided (19). But BOETHIUS is not concerned with precise terminological distinctions here. What is important is the allusion to the dialectical method, something not referred to so far in the *Consolation*, though other characteristic aspects of the mind's activity have been elaborated in preceding parts of the work. For that reason BOETHIUS can dwell on the method of collection and division, and then proceed to allude more briefly to previously treated themes in the following lines.

Before turning to those lines, one feature of BOETHIUS' evocation of the collection / division theme should be considered. In lines 19-20 the order is division, followed by collection. The sequence contradicts the principle of *Phaedrus* 265d and *Philebus* 16e that collection should precede division. In fact, in the dialogues where the method is extensively practised, *Politicus* and *Sophist*, collection is omitted, the generic form is posited as self-evident, and the method is one of division, even if the programmatic statement of *Politic.* 285a-b appears to regard the two procedures as complementary.[17] PLOTINUS reflects the principle of collection followed by division in 3.3.1.16ff., but in 4.4.1.16-18 division and ascent (= collection) are listed as alternatives, in that order. This informal reference to the procedure corresponds to what we find in BOETHIUS, and it is unlikely that the sequence in BOETHIUS is any more significant than it is in the second PLOTINUS passage, although BOETHIUS, the reader and would-be translator of PLATO's dialogues, might naturally think of division before collection, recalling the practice of the dialogues before the assertions of methodological principle.

But it is also possible that BOETHIUS is reflecting an account of the method of collection and division that had become standard by this time. The sequence division-collection is found in PROCLUS (*In Parm.* 650-1), in a passage which adduces both the *Sophist* and the *Phaedrus* accounts. There PROCLUS distinguishes between διαιρετική and διοριστική, the latter evidently corresponding to PLATO's συναγωγή. PROCLUS says that it is so called because, following the process of division, it defines each of the terms which the division has yielded by collecting (συνάγουσαν, 650.38) a set of ideas into a single definition.[18] And the same kind of method appears to be assumed already by GALEN (*De plac. Hipp. et Plat.* 9.5.11-13 [2.566 DE LACY]).[19]

In both the PLOTINUS passages mentioned above, collection and division are related to the metaphor of mind's ascent and descent in a way that they are not in PLATO (PLOT. 3.3.1.20 κατάβαινε, 4.4.1.17 ἄνωθεν, κάτωθεν). BOETHIUS reflects this Neoplatonic synthesis of collection / division with the upward / downward path metaphor of the hypothesis method in *Republic* 6,511, and the ascent / descent language of the Cave simile (*Rep.* 7, 515e. 516e. 517b. 519d).[20] The motif of the soul's ascent and descent has been treated in earlier poems of the *Consolation*, and so lines 21-3 of this poem can evoke them in the briefest of terms. The lines recall in particular 4 m. 1,[21] where the astral journey of souls is described in language that is heavily dependent upon *Phaedrus* 246c-247c; a more general influence of *Theaetetus* 173e-174a may also be discerned. There the metaphor of flight is combined with the upward / downward metaphor: the philosopher's mind , geometrising as well as astronomising, both ascends to the skies and descends to the subterranean depths. The interweaving of motifs here has probably influenced

17 See W.K.C. GUTHRIE, *A History of Greek Philosophy* 4 (Cambridge 1975) 48 n. 1; ibid. 5 (Cambridge 1978) 129-33, 166-8.

18 Perhaps PROCLUS is influenced by the use of συναγάγωμεν at *Soph.* 224c9; cf. *In Parm.* 656.2-4. I owe this and the following GALEN reference to David SEDLEY.

19 Cf. SYRIANUS, *In met.* 56.3.

20 For a discussion of the meaning of PLATO's upward and downward paths in the *Republic* see R. ROBINSON, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, 2nd edn. (Oxford 1953) 160-77.

21 Cf. 5 m. 3.20 and, in the *prosae*, 5.4.30; 5.5.12. On the flight of the soul as a poetic and philosophical motif see O'DALY (n. 3) 201-6; R.B. RUTHERFORD, *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius: A Study* (Oxford 1989) 155-61.

BOETHIUS. The soul's descent, on the other hand, although here primarily related to the downward metaphor for dialectic, also recalls the κάθοδος that is not so much a culpable fall of the soul (as in PLOTINUS 4.8.1.1-40),[22] as an expression of the soul's mission, the "descent for the perfection of the universe" of PLOTINUS 4.8.5.2. It echoes a theme of 3 m. 9.18ff., the descent of the souls in their astral vehicles sown in the universe, lines which echo the account of the formation of human souls in *Timaeus* 41d-42d.

The concept of a mind ranging in the universe, of the dynamism of ascent and descent, procession and reversion, is suggested in succinct, subtle terms in these lines. A similar succinctness is found in the reference to the role of introspection in the acquisition or realization of knowledge (24-5).[23] These lines, too, recall earlier passages in the work, the soul that *in semet reditura meat* (3 m. 9.16), and the exhortation to the mind of 3 m. 11.3-4: *in se reuoluat intimi lucem uisus / longosque in orbem cogat inflectens motus.* BOETHIUS' language in line 25 recalls LUCRETIUS' *nam maiore fide debet reperirier illud, / sponte sua ueris quod possit uincere falsa* (4.480-1). There LUCRETIUS is defending the Epicurean thesis of the truth of all sense impressions. BOETHIUS' echo of his language is not merely a rhetorical assertion of the sovereign mind's power, but one that, by implication, counters all empiricist theories of knowledge, Epicurean as well as Stoic (the ostensible focus of the poem). It recalls the words of LUCRETIUS to emphasize that his views are also under attack.

Lines 26-9 consolidate the notion of the mind's causal role and its power that the preceding lines have developed, with a reference back to the impression-theory of the earlier part of the poem (*impressas ... notas*, 29; cf. *imprimi*, 5 and *notas / pressas ... litteras*, 9f.). The return to the discarded theory in 28f. signals the alternative account of sense-perception, based upon the concept of mind just adumbrated, that follows in 30ff. The Aristotelian classification of causes is probably also alluded to: the mind is the efficient, rather than, in any sense, the material cause of sense-perception.[24]

IV

Praecedit tamen excitans
ac uires animi mouens
uiuo in corpore passio

22 Cf. PLOTINUS 4.3.12; 4.3.17.21-8. See J.M. RIST, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (Cambridge 1967) 115-29.

23 The expression *sese referens sibi* (24) recalls AUGUSTINE's use of *se sibi reddere* to refer to introspection: e.g. *c. Acad.* 1.1; *ord.* 1.3. See further O'DALY (n. 12) 208. On *se reddere* see S.J. HARRISON on VERG. *Aen.* 10.683-4.

24 The αἴτιον καὶ ποιητικόν of *De an.* 3.5, 430a12 may also be echoed: see MAGEE (n. 6) 129.

cum uel lux oculos ferit
uel uox auribus instrepit.
Tum mentis uigor excitus
quas intus species tenet
ad motus similes uocans
notis applicat exteris
introrsumque reconditis
formis miscet imagines.

"Yet what comes first is the experience in a living body which arouses and sets in motion the powers of the mind, when light strikes the eyes or a tone sounds in the ears. Then the mind's energy is aroused and, summoning to similar movements the forms which it holds within it, it applies to them to the marks from without, and mixes up the images with the forms stored within."

In order to understand what BOETHIUS is talking about here, it is necessary to consider what he says in the two adjacent prose sections of the work, 5.4 and 5.5. In 5.4. four levels or degrees of apprehension are distinguished, *sensus, imaginatio, ratio,* and *intellegentia. Sensus,* which we may translate by "sensation", and which clearly corresponds to Greek αἴσθησις, registers the properties (*qualitates*) of bodies (5.5.1), by which BOETHIUS presumably means what PLOTINUS means when he talks of ποιότης as the object of sense-perception (4.4.23.3), viz. everything other than matter.[25] In 5.4.28 BOETHIUS says that the object of *sensus* is the "shape in the underlying matter" (*figuram in subiecta materia*). Sensation reacts to a *passio corporis* (5.5.1; cf. 5 m. 4.32), which arouses (*excitetque*, 5.5.1; cf. 5 m. 4.30, 35) or sets in motion (5 m. 4.31) the mind's powers or activity (*vires, actus*: 5 m. 4.31; 5.5.1), rousing the forms (*species, formae*) that are quiescent within it (5 m. 4.36f.; *quiescentes intrinsecus formas*, 5.5.1).

This account of perception does not make it clear whether the forms in the mind are the archetypal transcendent Forms in Intellect, which our minds cognize (5 m. 3.20: *cum mentem cerneret altam*) intuitively or non-discursively (5.4.30: *ipsam illam simplicem formam pura mentis acie contuetur*).[26] It is, however, as unlikely that BOETHIUS intends to say that every perceptual judgement requires a reference to Intellect, as it is that PLOTINUS does so when he talks about fitting particulars to forms.[27] For one thing, animals perceive and exercise imagination (5.5.3). Pre-

25 See BLUMENTHAL (n. 12) 76.

26 On the question of the human mind's possession of intuitive intellect (*intellegentia*) see MAGEE (n. 6) 144-9. Cf. n. 38 below.

27 See p. 336f. below. Cf. E.K. EMILSSON, *Plotinus on Sense-Perception* (Cambridge 1988) 134-5.

sumably an animal also "passes judgement" (*iudicat*, 5.5.1) in perception, in the sense of an immediate apprehension of, for example, a bodily shape (5.5.7). But do perceptual judgements in humans involve the activity of discursive reason (*ratio*)? Now it is characteristic of discursive reason that it can know the objects of sensation and imagination in universal terms (*in universitatis ratione*, 5.5.7). And *ratio* cognizes the immanent form in individuals in universal terms: *speciem ... ipsam quae singularibus inest universali consideratione perpendit* (5.4.29). Now the forms of 5 m. 4.36f. and 5.5.1 are in the mind, and not in the individual objects of perception. But they must somehow enable the mind to cognize in universal terms on the basis of perceptions. Moreover, even at the earlier stage in the process at which a perceptual judgement is being made, the mind's use of the forms within it enables me to perceive that this is a thrush singing or this is a man. We might compare this function of the forms with that of the "unfolded und separated" forms in the soul, of which PLOTINUS speaks at 1.1.8.6-8.[28] They are in the discursive reason, and thus distinguished from the Forms cognized by Intellect, and they are activated in perception. Perception may not be identifiable with discursive reason, either in PLOTINUS or BOETHIUS. But the forms which perception employs when perceptual judgements are being made are those forms which are in the discursive reason. The use of concepts is different in each case, but it is the same concepts that are being used.

What is puzzling about this account so far is the absence of a clear function for *imaginatio* in it. In perceptual processes, BOETHIUS says, the mind applies the forms to the external "marks" (*notae*), it *miscet imagines* with the forms within (5 m. 4.39-40). What does this mean? In line 3 of the poem BOETHIUS appears to distinguish between *sensus* and *imagines*. That distinction may be elucidated by what BOETHIUS says about the starting-point (*exordium*) of *imaginatio* in 5.4.37. It starts from the senses or from sensations (*ex sensibus* is ambiguous), and it sees and forms shapes (*uisendi formandique figuras*). At 5.4.28 BOETHIUS says that *imaginatio* has as its objects the shape alone without matter (*solam sine materia ... figuram*), in contradistinction to *sensus*. *Sensus* registers the *figurae* presented to it, so to speak, whereas *imaginatio* constructs *figurae*. It is clear that BOETHIUS is referring to φαντασία, the image-making faculty: but what, more precisely, is the role of this faculty in his account of perception?

Let us begin to try and answer this question by considering what BOETHIUS means by the mind's applying (*applicat*, 5 m. 4.38) the forms to the sensations of external objects. This is a recognizable Neoplatonic doctrine.[29] PLOTINUS speaks

28 See EMILSSON (n. 27) 134-7.

29 The doctrine may reflect the discussion of perception in *Theaetet*. 193c-194a, where the signs or imprints on the wax block are said to be "fitted" or "applied to", "connected" or "held straight in line with", perceptions (I use the translation of PLATO's terms by M.J. LEVETT, in BURNYEAT [n. 11]).

of fitting particulars (συναρμόττουσα) to forms, and using the latter "as we use a ruler (κανόνι) for judging straightness" (1.6.3.3ff.). There is similar talk of "rules" (κανόσιν) at 5.3.4.14ff., where they are said to be in the discursive reason and derived from *nous*, and to enable us to understand and judge external things (cf. 6.7.6.2-6).[30] Identifying the object presented to us as an apple, says PROCLUS, is not a function of αἴσθησις, for it involves judgement (δόξα), *in Tim.* 1.249.13ff. And δόξα can do so, because it is fitted with the λόγοι of its objects (ib. 1.293.3).[31] These texts attempt to account for the progression from sensation to perceptual judgement, including judgement about the truth or falsehood of perceptions. Similar assertions are found in AUGUSTINE: the forms are standards or rules (*regulae*) that enable us to distinguish between the truth and falsehood of the images with which we deal in perceptual processes (*uera rel.* 58; cf. *trin.* 9.10).[32] We also find in AUGUSTINE the notion that when the body is affected by a certain change, the recipient's activity of heightened concentration (*attentiores motus*) induces sense-perception (*mus.* 6.10).[33] This may elucidate BOETHIUS' talk of the *motus* or *actus* of the mind in perception (5 m.4.37; 5.5.1).

Now we can take *miscet imagines* in line 40 of our poem to be simply another way of expressing the mind's application or "fitting" of forms to *notae*. That is the way it is commonly taken. But there is another possibility. Perhaps the words do not mean "mix the images with the forms", a metaphor which is not immediately intelligible in the way that the traditional metaphor of "fitting" or "applying" is. Consider another possibility. The *imagines* are mixed up, in the sense of being blended into a mix, with the forms as the instruments or means that enables the mix to be made.[34] In other words, *miscet imagines* is the equivalent of *formandi ... figuras* (5.4.37). If that is so, then line 40 refers to the activity of *imaginatio*, identifying its role in the process of perception.

There is a precedent for the metaphor and the notion in PLATO's *Sophist*. There it is suggested that judgement (δόξα) which occcurs δι' αἰσθήσεως is rightly called φαντασία. (264a4-6). This "appearance" (PLATO goes on to call it φαίνεται) is a σύμμειξις αἰσθήσεως καὶ δόξης (264b1-2). Now this cannot mean that it is a blend of perception and judgement, for the *result* is δόξα. So αἴσθησις is a necessary condition of the mix, it is the means which enables φαντασία to occur. Element x is mixed with y (instrumentally), but x alone is the result. What happens is a "mix" from perception and judgement, in which the mix consists of the φαν-

30 Cf. BLUMENTHAL (n.12) 105-8.

31 See H.J. BLUMENTHAL, "Plotinus on perception", *BICS* 29 (1982) 1-11 (here 8).

32 Cf. O'DALY (n. 12) 96-102.

33 For the background to this view see O'DALY (n.12) 83-7.

34 For *miscere* meaning "to mix up, concoct" see *OLD* s.v. 2. This way of understanding *miscere* was proposed to me, as was the relevance of the *Sophist* passage below, by Myles BURNYEAT (who should not, however, be held responsible for what I have made of his proposal).

ταςία = δόξα (one sense of "from") and is achieved by means of (another sense of "from") αἴσθησις.

If line 40 refers to the activity of the *imaginatio*, its role is not easily distinguished from that of *sensus*. Both "judge" (5.4.28): is *imaginatio* not required for perceptual judgements to be made? Now it is plausible to assume that for BOETHIUS, as for PLOTINUS, perceptual judgements are direct apprehensions, of a non-inferential kind, about something acting upon the senses.[35] The concluding lines of the poem describe a mental activity that accompanies the perceptual judgement. The mind forms an *imago* of the perceived object. BOETHIUS is not talking about the object of sense-perception itself: the *notae exterae* (38), which are identical with the "shape in the underlying matter" (5.4.28), are the objects of perception. But the *imagines* of line 40 of the poem are the *figurae* of 5.4.37, namely the objects of representation (φαντασία / *imaginatio*). This is an internalized *imago* (5.4.28), and not the object of perception. Like PLOTINUS, BOETHIUS distinguishes between perception and representation. PLOTINUS, following ARISTOTLE, insists that representation is the conclusion of perception, and it apppears as if he understands acts of sense-perception to be simultaneous with the formation of φαντάσματα (4.3.29.20-26).[36] Like PLOTINUS, BOETHIUS finds it not always easy to distinguish between αἴσθησις and φαντασιά, but the basis for a distinction is none the less there in both thinkers. They are both, like PLUTARCH of Athens,[37] concerned to define the intermediate role of φαντασία / *imaginatio* between αἴσθησις / *sensus* and διάνοια / *ratio*.

What BOETHIUS, on this interpretation, is saying in the *Consolatio* would be consistent with his remarks on *imaginatio* elsewhere. In a passage in his second commentary on ARISTOTLE's *De Interpetatione*, he argues that sensations or thoughts must be translated into an *imaginatio* before mind can deal with them, disentangling what the *imaginatio* has supplied:

> *nam cum res aliqua sub sensum vel sub cognitionem cadit,*
> *prius eius quaedam necesse est imaginatio nascatur, post*
> *vero plenior superveniat intellectus cunctas eius explicans*
> *partes quae confuse fuerant imaginatione presumptae*
> *(In perih. 2.29.6-10).*

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35 For PLOTINUS see EMILSSON (n. 27) 121-5.

36 Cf. EMILSSON (n. 27) 109-12. For ARISTOTLE see *De an.* 3.3, 428b10-429a2. On PLOTINUS' debt to ARISTOTLE's views on φαντασία see G. WATSON, *Phantasia in Classical Thought* (Galway 1988) 97-103.

37 Ps.-PHILOPONUS, *In de an.* 515 HAYDUCK; cf. H.J. BLUMENTHAL, "Plutarch's Exposition of the *De anima* and the Psychology of Proclus", *Entretiens Fondation Hardt* 21 (Geneva 1975) 123-51 (here 134).

In his second commentary on PORPHYRY's *Isagoge*, BOETHIUS has similar things to say:

> *haec tantum humano generi praesto est, quae non solum*
> *sensus imaginationesque perfectas et non inconditas capit,*
> *sed etiam pleno actu intellegentiae quod imaginatio*
> *suggessit, explicat atque confirmat (In Isag. 2.137.8-11).*[38]

There is another possible interpretation of line 40. It, too, depends upon understanding *miscet imagines* in the sense of "mix up images". But the images and presentations to which it refers would not be those which are disentangled by the mind when it makes a judgement. There are Platonic accounts of the process of perception, as A.C. LLOYD has recently reminded us, which put belief or judgement before presentation.[39] These accounts follow PLATO's *Philebus* 38-9: the fourth chapter of ALCINOUS'(or ALBINUS') *Didaskalikos* is one such account, another is found in PORPHYRY's commentary on PTOLEMY's *Harmonics* (13.15-14.28 DÜRING). This kind of presentation would be a secondary one, either accompanying perceptual judgements or forming a further stage in the epistemological process. Can BOETHIUS be referring to such a φαντασία? If he is, it might be difficult to reconcile such a position with what he says about the process whereby *sensus* is succeeded by *imaginatio* in *Consolatio* 5.4 and 5.5. There would merely be this isolated allusion at the end of our poem. And he would be adopting a different approach from that of the commentaries, as we have just seen. That in itself is not impossible: BOETHIUS, who ascribes some kind of judging role to *sensus* in the *Consolatio*, does not do so in the commentary on the *De interpretatione*.[40] But we have seen above that to say that sensation "judges" is not inconsistent with saying that it is only at a further stage in the process of perception that judgement, properly speaking, occurs. There is no strong evidence that BOETHIUS intends the *imagines* of line 40 to be other than those that facilitate judgement in the first instance.

A final point. The *imagines* referred to at the end of the poem are clearly "correct" presentations, which reflect the way things actually are in the external world. The instrumental role of the Forms as objects of thought guarantees their reliability. BOETHIUS is not here concerned with the fallibility of our judgements of the exter-

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38 Cf. WATSON (n. 36) 154; MAGEE (n. 6) 98, 134-7. For *actus intellegentiae* in *In Isag.* 2.137.10f. cf. *cons. phil.* 5.5.1 (*actum mentis*); for *explicare* in *In perih.* 2.29 and in *In Isag.* 2.137.11 cf. *cons. phil.* 5 m. 4.11. It is clear from both the *In Isag.* and *In perih.* passages just quoted that BOETHIUS is there using *intellectus* and *intellegentia* to refer to discursive reason.

39 LLOYD (n. 6) 142-3.

40 Cf. MAGEE (n. 6) 99-100.

nal world, or with false impressions or fabricated images. For that reason the poem does not exploit the negative aspects of *imaginatio*, its susceptibility to error.[41]

V

The poem's concluding lines (35-40), with their positive account of the perceptive process, correspond closely to lines 10-17, which reject the Stoic account of perception by evoking the concept of the dynamic mind. The verbal correspondences are striking: *sed mens ... uigens* (10) - *tum mentis vigor* (35); *explicat* (11) - *applicat* (38); *patiens iacet* (12) - *excitus ... tenet* (35f.); *reddit imagines* (15) - *miscet imagines* (40). Thus the conclusions of the first and second halves of the poem are linked to one another, with reiteration of the motif of the powerful mind, and the use of contrasting but related terms to highlight the differences between the acceptable and rejected accounts of φαντασία.

41 Thus BOETHIUS does not exploit the mirror-simile for φαντασία, as PLOTINUS (4.3.30; 1.4.10) and PORPHYRY (*Ad Gaurum* 6.1; cf. SYNESIUS, *De insomniis* 134b) do, possibly influenced by PLATO, *Tim.* 71b (see WATSON [n. 36] 11f.100f.105.110). BOETHIUS probably avoids the simile because he has used the notion of the mirror-reflection in the discarded account of perception in lines 14f. (see p. 331 above). BOETHIUS likewise avoids the Porphyrian image of φαντασία as a veil (*Sent* 40, p. 48.6 f. L.), on which see WATSON (n. 27) 104f. Cf. A. CHARLES, "L'imagination, miroir de l'âme selon Proclus", in: *Le Néoplatonisme* (*Colloque du C.N.R.S. Royaumont*, 9-13 juin 1969), Paris 1971, 241-8.

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References to Augustine and Plotinus are confined to those studies where they are not the principal subject matter. Names of modern scholars are omitted.